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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[FROM THE FANGS OF THE SERPENT.]

THE LOVE PACT.

CHAPTER VIII.

Forget thee! If to dream by night and think of thee by day,
If all the worship deep and true a poet's heart can pay,
If prayer in absence breathed for thee to Heaven's protecting power,
If winged thoughts that fly to thee a thousand in an hour,
If busy fancy weaving thee with all my future lot,
If this thou call'st forgetting, then indeed thou art forgot.

FRANK.

The year was drawing to a close.

The dull gloom of the month of fog and mist had just changed to the crisp, cold brightness appropriate to that in which King Christmas holds his revels, and, as in sympathy with the season, the clouds of sorrow which had gathered round some loving hearts were dispelled as by magic, and the sunshine of hope and joy replaced them.

For science had wrought almost a miracle. She had brought back—Alcestis-like—a man from the grave, or at least from under the shade of the tomb's very portals.

Captain Hugh Mostyn was restored to life and light and the embraces of his erstwhile heart-broken sire.

It fell out in this way:

Skilful and wise as were the surgeons who had tended him, they saw no means whereby aid might be afforded, but shook their heads and trusted Nature might do something yet.

One day a stranger, a man of European repute, visited the hospital.

He was well received by his brother surgeons, and shown all there was of interest in that grand refuge for the afflicted.

But nothing there attracted the stranger's attention as did the stalwart, handsome young Englishman who lay upon his pallet so sadly still.

Many were the questions the surgeon asked, and at last he inquired, with a certain hesitation lest he should infringe the etiquette of his profession, to be allowed to examine and if need were to operate on the patient.

Liberal minded, as befits men of science, and feeling also a genuine interest in the man stricken down in the full flush of youth and health, the hospital surgeons made no objection. It may be also that they were curious to learn the opinion of a man so eminent.

A short examination sufficed to convince the visitor that the patient's brain was pressed in at a certain part by a small fragment of bone from the skull.

There being no external wound at the place, this fact had escaped the notice of the doctors who had been in attendance upon the patient.

Instruments for trepanning being at hand, with supple fingers deft and light as those of a maiden, but strong as steel, the stranger performed the necessary operation; and at once, as a man wakes at cockcrow from healthful sleep, Captain Mostyn recovered life and consciousness and sanity.

His bodily frame, save from the wounds, now healed, inflicted by the heels of Bajazet, had lost none of its vigour, and, the impediment which had held his sense enchained once removed, the young soldier was able to leave the refuge whither he had been conveyed almost

immediately the successful operation was concluded.

We will not describe the rapture of the old earl at his son's resuscitation.

Nor was Earl Thanet the only one who rejoiced that the captain was given back to life and society.

He was a man universally esteemed both for his own sake and that of the aged peer his father, and his regiment had well-nigh idolised the daring officer ever impetuous in attack and sternly resolute in a reverse.

There was nevertheless one to whom the news was as gall and wormwood.

Rupert Kesterton was in the North, looking after the Suncross Mines, and occasionally varying that occupation by a flying visit to the Vavassour Dower House; and when he received by letter the unwelcome intelligence of the captain's recovery, it fell upon the schemer with crushing weight.

For Rupert saw the golden vision he had cherished as nearly certain to become tangible now dissolving as snow-flakes in the sunshine. Doubtless Hugh Mostyn would supersede him in his present occupation so soon as he was able to do it.

Then what remained of all the schemer's plans?

He had not made sufficient progress in securing a good position in the world to warrant the supposition that the Dowager Vavassour would bestow upon him her daughter's hand, even if Adeline herself had seemed more susceptible to his half-concealed suit than she appeared to be.

Besides, how was he to secure an establishment with his impaired income, his tarnished credit

and a host of claimants upon his slender purse?

But he would make no false move, he resolved, nor leave anything undone that would tend to maintain his position in the earl's good graces.

And he would go to town at the earliest moment and judge for himself of the reality of the sudden recovery.

Perhaps Captain Mostyn's health might still be frail, and this improvement only temporary.

Perhaps, too, he thought, with an evil glee, if the captain had not killed himself on this occasion his adventurous spirit might yet bring about that desirable result, be it on hunting-field, be it in his father's yacht, or perchance by swift and fatal disease caught up among the low people whom he strove to aid.

With this charitable hope Rupert Kesterton made his arrangements to proceed to London in a few days in order to congratulate his kinsmen.

Meanwhile Captain Mostyn lost no time in making himself acquainted with the position of affairs, both with the events connected with his accident and those which had since transpired.

He learned that in all probability he owed his life to three persons—Lady Adeline De Vavasour, the Yorkshire engineer, and the foreign doctor.

He learned also, from the earl and from his cousin's letters, the part that Rupert Kesterton had taken in the earl's affairs.

At which latter discovery a frown crossed the captain's broad brow.

He had thus in the first place a treble debt of gratitude to acknowledge, and Hugh Mostyn was not the man to sit down quietly until this was done.

His thanks to the doctor were soon paid. The grave, dry man of science received the manly recognition of his services in a curious, brusque, yet kindly manner.

The old man was somewhat like a prickly pear—forbidding in exterior but ripe and rich at heart.

"You owe me no gratitude, Captain Mostyn," he said, tersely. "But thanks to Providence are due from you and me that my steps were led to your grand asylum for the stricken. That I have restored a young man whose praise is on the lips of all men to an afflicted father's arms is ample reward for the trivial pains I have taken."

Necessarily deferring his acknowledgments to Lady Adeline until he could safely journey to the Suncross Mines and take the Dower House in the way, Hugh Mostyn next obtained from the porter the address of the young artisan who had made so many calls of inquiry at the hospital.

Despite the remonstrances of Lord Thanet, the captain insisted upon making a personal visit and alone to the lodgings of Robert Wilmer.

With his many reasons for thankfulness Hugh Mostyn's brow however wore a heavy cloud as he stepped with something of the old lightness of foot into the brougham to make this journey.

The coachman had received orders to stop first at some chambers in a fashionable thoroughfare leading from Piccadilly.

Yes. He learned, in answer to his eager queries, that letters had been left for "M. Hughes Thanet" a long time, and, as the porter did not know whither to forward them, they were retained.

He was not then on duty, and the letters were locked in his private room, but if Mr. Thanet would call again they should be ready for him.

Hugh Mostyn with a smile on his face bade the coachman drive on, and as he sank back on the cushions murmured:

"Thank heaven! She has not forgotten. She loves me—loves me!"

The lodgings of the artisan were soon reached, and Captain Mostyn, being directed to the third story, ascended the rickety staircase with an alacrity apparently increased by the intelligence he had just obtained.

He scarcely expected to find the artisan at

home at this hour, but preferred to call personally.

And if he had chosen his time badly he yet knew the message he intended to leave would repay Robert Wilmer for making a return visit.

His rap at the door was answered by "Come in, neighbour," in a cheery woman's voice with a strong provincial accent, which Captain Mostyn easily recognised.

The captain was as much at home in the habitations of the workers in the fields and forests as in those of the town toilers.

It might indeed be said of him, in the words of the great English poet:

"Love had he learned in cots where poor men lie."

He needed therefore no second summons, but entered at once.

The room was tenanted by Mrs. Wilmer only, busily engaged in knitting a stout grey worsted stocking.

The soft step of the captain's elastic and lightly shod foot had deceived the old lady, who expected to see one of the women of the house.

She rose somewhat hastily at the apparition of this handsome, stately gentleman, though without a shadow of confusion, and, placing the shining pins with their grey web upon the table, made a quaint, old-world courtesy with her wrinkled hands crossed over her bosom, and inquired in her chirrupy little voice the purport of the stranger's visit.

A few hearty words exchanged it.

The old dame's face brightened.

She drew forward an old-fashioned Windsor chair, dusted its shining surface with her check apron—an operation wholly needless—and bade her visitor be seated.

In a few well-chosen words Captain Mostyn told his hostess of his recovery, enlarged on the gallantry of Robert Wilmer, to whom he said he was largely indebted for the preservation of his life, and went on to say that he had called to tender his grateful thanks and to inquire whether he could in return be of any use to his preserver.

The old dame listened with eager interest to the praise of her son, ejaculating once:

"Eh, he's a gey, guid lad."

And when the visitor had concluded she hastened to reply:

"Eh, eh, sir. The lad will be main glad to hear you are well again, for he's aye talking o' your lying so still and deathlike and hoping for your coming back to life. He might well, too," she went on, with a glance of admiration at the fine features and gigantic form of her visitor, "he might well, for a braver lad than you—ye'll forgive me, sir?—never stepped in shoe leather. I've no' clapped eyes on the likes of ye sin' I left the Dales."

"Ah," returned Hugh, falling into her homely manner of speech, "but you know your folks say 'tis one thing to be big and bonny and another to be brave and bountiful."

"Weel, captain—as Robert always ca's you—I know the old saying, but my son has told me what he has heard o' ye. But there, I'm a foolish old wife to be praising ye thus. 'Tis little you'll think o' my words. But you should hear Robert."

"I can appreciate his good words, Mrs. Wilmer, and his good actions also. It was at peril of his own life that he aided in the rescue of mine. There are but few so unselfish as to run such risk for a stranger."

The aged, wrinkled face lighted up with a bright glow at hearing the welcome encomiums upon her loved son.

"Ay, unselfish he is indeed, Captain Mostyn," said Mrs. Wilmer—"always thinking o' the weal of others before his own. He bore up manfu' when hard times came and we left the shelter o' the ould roof tree; and then when we'd gotten i' this smoky place—this London—an' the lad couldna get work and cam' home each night sore tired and beaten he'd aye put on a cheerfu' face to keep th' ould mither's heart from bein' woefu'. Eh, 'tis a brave lad. And when the siller were nearly gone Robert e'en sold the books

he loved so well ere I should want bite or sup, though I saw his eyes were red and moist and knew the loss went to his very heart."

"Mr. Wilmer is in work now?" queried the captain, kindly.

"Ay, at McCentrics and Governors', the great firm o' machinists; an' it's main thankfu' to Providence I am, for now Robert will make his way to be a man i' the world."

It was evident Mrs. Wilmer had the touching and unquestioning maternal faith in the ability of her child, which even the ill-success of the loved one fails to shake.

In this instance however it was well founded.

"Mr. Wilmer is attached to his profession, I presume?" inquired the captain.

"Yes, sir, and has been from a child. He'd toddle into the shop and be aye about the forge when he was too wee to lift aught but the little tools his father made for him; and as he grew Robert was the best smith in the county side. And he's aye studied hard at his 'gometry' and mechanics and has a pile o' plans o' new machines better than aught that's used, which he maybe 'll be able to make one day."

"Perhaps I can help him, Mrs. Wilmer. I owe him life and would not prove ungrateful. It is partly for that I come to-day. When can I see him?"

"'Tis Friday now and I don't expect him home till evening, but Robert leaves the works early to-morrow. He can come to you then in the afternoon if you wish it."

"Yes, that will do. I should like to see him at my father's house—there is the address," said Hugh Mostyn, taking out a card and handing a card from it to Mrs. Wilmer. "Now, I'll be going," he continued, "but I shall see you again before long, Mrs. Wilmer. I hope."

The captain smiled pleasantly as he rose from the chair, looking terribly big for the tiny room.

His smile was returned by the old woman, whose favour he had evidently secured.

Ere he extended his hand to say farewell Hugh, with an expression of interest, turned to look at the drawings on the wall.

He had previously remarked with some curiosity that though the furniture was old-fashioned and scanty, many evidences of taste were visible in the little room.

There were books on some hanging shelves, a few cheap but well-chosen plaster figures on the mantelpiece, three or four of the chair backs were covered with crochet work of rare delicacy, which excited the visitor's surprise, and the walls were adorned with unframed drawings.

Those which first caught Hugh Mostyn's eye were mechanical sketches of most intricate and beautiful character.

"Your son's work, Mrs. Wilmer?" he said.

"Yes, sir, and he has heaps more o' them in his portfolio, as he ca's it. I don't understand them mysen, but I know they're clever, and some o' the painted ones look very gay."

The captain did not answer, for at the moment his eye fell on two small pencil sketches.

They were of a very different character to the mechanical drawings around the room.

Each was a landscape with some buildings of a foreign appearance, and, although showing little acquaintance with the mannerisms of the drawing master, they evinced both facility and power of execution.

Hugh Mostyn looked at them long and earnestly while Mrs. Wilmer supposed him to be absorbed in the contemplation of rack and pinion, cog-wheel and eccentric, in the drawings beside them.

He turned away with a sigh.

"It is strange," he said to himself. "I could have sworn I knew both those scenes—a dream I suppose of my long trance."

Then he turned and shook hands with Mrs. Wilmer, bidding her farewell in his full, rich tones, and impressing upon her again his wish to see her son on the morrow.

He would not allow his hostess to accompany him to the street door, but she watched his stalwart form descending the stairs and murmured:

"Good luck to your sonsy face and kind heart

where'er they may gae. Eh, and Robert's gained a real friend, and one well worth the gaining."

The brougham dashed rapidly along on its return journey, pulling up at the house where it had previously stopped.

The porter had returned, and the letters were ready.

They had been sealed up in a packet the envelope of which the captain tore open in eager haste as the vehicle again started.

There were six letters inside written on thin foreign note-paper and addressed in a curious small hand which was evidently feminine.

Hugh Mostyn pressed them passionately to his lips.

Then he sorted them according to the dates of the post marks by a kind of mechanical movement, and, taking up the first, broke it open and spread out its thin sheet.

He read the lines aloud in a low voice, as though the sound of the words was sweet.

"MON CHER HUGHES," it ran, "I have received thy last letter with a glad heart. I have smiled and wept over it—silly child that I am—laughed for joy that thou canst cherish hope of our happy future—cried for grief that there are still so many obstacles to overcome. But we will have faith in Heaven, my Hugh. I remember thee by name each morn and each even when I bow my knee in prayer. Pardon my silly little letters, for thou knowest I am but an ignorant country maiden. But write thou to me, my Hugh, a long, long letter and send it quickly, for thy letters are my life. I read them over and over again. They are blurred by glad tears and dried again by warm kisses. Write quickly, I pray thee, to—Thy Dear Friend EUGENIE."

"Fidèle continues to mourn for thee, and sends a paw shake and kiss—and I—ah, I send thee a million."

"Dear child," ejaculated the captain, "but, ah, what must she have thought of my long silence?"

He was not long in doubt.

The next epistle struck a key note of alarm—or terror—which the writer strove unavailingly to conceal.

"MY DEAR HUGH.—I write to thee in doubt and trouble. Ten long—oh, so long!—days have passed since my last letter was sent to thee and no reply has come. Oh, my beloved, art thou ill? art thou forgetful of thy promise? or is it that the business or pleasure of the world wins thy thoughts away from the cottage girl thou usdest to praise? Hugh, I cannot write more, but I beg of thee, for the love of all thou holdest dear and sacred, to send me a letter—if it be but one little line.—Thy Dear and Anxious Friend, "EUGENIE."

Hugh Mostyn's eyes were moist with tears. The great, brave soldier who had never flinched from foeman's hostile steel or the fatesome rain of shot and shell turned deadly pale.

"There are four more," he murmured, in a strange, broken voice. "This is the first after my enforced silence. Oh, what may not the others hold?"

He opened the third and fourth, for the soldier's instincts compelled him to meet his trial with military orderliness, and perused them. They were in the same strain as the second, but each more earnest, more despairing than the last—conjuring him by every human obligation to reply.

With his lips compressed and face convulsed the captain opened and read the fifth letter.

"HUGH," it ran, "for I dare not venture to call thee 'dear' any longer, I beseech thee to be pitiful to me. The slow weeks pass and I have no comfort. Oh, Hugh, my life is no longer endurable. Thou foundest me content and happy in my quiet solitude. Thou awakenedst a love which took me to Paradise and made the dull earth and its common tasks as naught without thee. Thou wilt not write to me, so I will seek thee. I must forget thee for ever, but I will yet see thy face again. To-morrow I leave home to cross the sea and

seek thee in thine own misty land.—EUGENIE."

Hugh looked at the date again with distended eyes, then tore open the last letter in frantic haste.

It bore the London post mark and was very brief.

"HUGH.—All is over! I cannot find thee and I can return no more to my own sunny land. They could tell me naught at the place to which my letters were sent, but promised they would keep this with the others shouldst thou ever come thither. Farewell, dearest! Ere to-morrow's sun illuminate the earth I shall be in the cold grave—I and poor Fidèle. Think, sometimes, Hughes, of the little French girl who gave her heart and life for thee. I send thee one of the locks thou hast praised in happier hours to aid thy memory. Farewell! Heaven's blessing be on thee, and—oh!—may its forgiveness be extended to—Thine in Death, "EUGENIE."

This man had faced peril and death silent and stern with set lips and noiseless tongue, as it is meet man should do, but the agony of this hour would not be controlled; and a cry bitter as of a woman who sees her first-born slain broke from Hugh Mostyn's ashen lips.

"Tompkins!" exclaimed the footman on the box, "pull up—sharp! The captain is dying!"

CHAPTER IX.

Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear, by my sword. SHAKESPEARE.

THE notary turned exultantly from the yawning rent in the ruined wall, where clouds of dust and crumbled mortar rose thickly in the moonlight.

He did not look forth from the breach. Somewhere beneath the fallen fragments of massive stone on the turf below a human form, crushed and disfigured well nigh beyond recognition, must lie.

He had triumphed!

Instead, Cochart bent his eyes on the figure of one still in life, though now motionless as death. Through the chasm in the wall a fuller flood of pale lustre lighted up the obscurity of that rude loft, with its piled bales of hay and straw and its quaint implements of farming, and fell softly on the face of Hélène D'Aubriion, who lay on the rough planks in a deep swoon.

Jacques knelt beside the unconscious girl and fixed his small, sinister eyes upon her beautiful face with a strange, gloating look. Under the influence of the mingled passions which agitated him the repulsive countenance of this man took on an expression so loathsome that his face became absolutely demonic.

It was convulsed by two of the intensest influences which dominate the human breast—hate, now victorious, and what he himself would have termed triumphant love.

Love!

Was it not an unutterable degradation that this man should apply to his coarse predilection the word sacred to the tender affection the mother gives her child, the unquestioning heart surrender which the maiden tenders to her beloved?

Hate Jacques Cochart could feel in its most intense malignancy. Nowhere on this side the region of lost souls existed one of more vindictive and ruthless heart; but love? No! To that selfish, cruel, and narrow spirit such emotion in his purity and power were impossible.

For an instant the notary looked fixedly at the unconscious face, then, passing his long, lank arms round the girl's waist, he drew her towards him, and, while a hideous smile contorted his features, he bent over Hélène and imprinted his cold, clammy lips upon the broad, noble brow of the girl.

Such a caress might well awaken her from the swoon. With a sharp, sudden shudder Hélène opened her eyes.

It seemed for one brief instant that she did not realise her position, for, with a look of horror at the distorted visage so near her, she closed her eyes again momentarily. Then, as the know-

ledge of her position flashed upon her, Hélène, with one short scream, struggled frantically to free herself.

In vain!

Young and strong though she was, she could not escape the hateful clinging of the notary's long, lithe arms—she could not avoid the proximity of his exultant face, or the hot breath which fell upon brow and neck; and, yielding at last to a woman's weakness—forgetting alike pride and prudence—the unhappy girl filled the old tower with piercing shrieks.

"Georges! Georges!" she cried. "Save me! Save me! Oh, Georges, oh, mon père, come and save me!"

"Calm yourself, mademoiselle," hissed the notary. "You will have to call much more loudly to awaken Monsieur Georges."

Hélène's eyes fell upon the ruined wall, and she realised the import of Cochart's sardonic words.

She recalled the moment before the fainting fit, with the agonised remembrance that her cousin was then risking life for her.

"Monster, you have killed him! Oh Georges, my beloved, slain for me! Release me, assassin, if you would not see me die in your murderous grasp!"

The notary had unclosed his lips for a gibing reply when a light form sprang from the ruined wall and descended beside the captor and captive.

The next moment Cochart's throat was grasped in a grip of steel, Hélène torn from his arms, and himself flung violently to the other side of the loft.

"Alive, Georges! Oh, Heaven, I thank thee!" cried Hélène, rapturously, as she sprang towards her cousin.

"Alive, ma chère cousine, I am truly happy to say," replied Georges, with his usual well-balanced speech and unconcerned demeanour.

The dandy had formed himself on the English models he so much admired, and coolness and imperturbability in every position, however exciting or perilous, he considered imperative.

The notary rose slowly to his feet, and approached Hélène and Georges. Something in the clinging fondness of the girl, the trustfulness in Georges which her every look and tone evinced, roused the man's hate well nigh to madness.

"Keep off," cried the Parisian, as Cochart approached cautiously. "Your punishment will come from the marquis to-morrow, betrayer of trust and would-be assassin!"

The notary made two or three slow steps nearer.

"Save me from him, Georges!" whispered Hélène, in a trembling voice.

"Keep off, I tell you!" exclaimed Georges, "or by the Heaven above us I shall forget how vile a thing you are, and myself give the punishment which the Marquis D'Aubriion should cause his grooms to administer."

The last words appeared to sting Jacques to sudden fury. Drawing his ungainly form down towards the floor, as does a wild beast before its fatal leap, the notary sprang upon them.

"Bête! cochon!" he shouted, as he did so. "It is I who will punish. I will strangle thee!"

With a sudden sweep of his arm he hurled Hélène away to the other side of the loft, then seized the young man by the throat.

The latter had endeavoured by a rapid movement to place himself in front of his cousin and meet the infuriated man in his mad rush.

But Cochart was too quick, and Georges' care for Hélène's safety left him open to a foe so alert as his antagonist.

The Parisian, although he courageously grappled with his assailant, found himself therefore placed at a disadvantage.

Although Georges possessed far more strength and activity and courage than most people would have credited him with, he was no match for this ungainly creature, whose long limbs enabled him to hold his enemy at arm's length while the vice-like fingers slowly but surely tightened their grip.

A feeling of supreme horror seized Georges Grandet. Bright lights flashed before his eyes and gathering shadows clouded them, a strangled, broken murmur as of a distant stormy sea sounded in his ears. Though he still struck out blindly, he felt the blows grew weaker—he knew that he was being choked to death!

Hélène had risen and approached the struggling men in the vain hope of affording aid to her cousin.

Cochart saw her design, and in all the frantic plunges and gyrations that the opponents made managed so to hold his adversary that the girl was unable to render the slightest help to Georges.

The end seemed near. Very weak and ill-aimed were the blows the Parisian still made. Hélène caught sight of his face as the group whirled madly round and round. His features were swollen and black, his eyes wildly staring, his tongue lolling from the open mouth!

Georges Grandet had escaped death in one form to meet it in another! and it was very near.

But Cochart had overlooked one peril.

In his mad desire to slay his foe, in his anxiety to render any interference by Hélène impossible, he had drawn his foe more and more near to the edge of the platform on which they stood.

The grapplers were now at the extreme verge, Cochart's back being towards it and his fiery eyes bent on Hélène's pallid face. The girl made an impulsive movement to save her cousin from this new danger—the notary stepped backward to baulk her—and, still maintaining their grasp, the men disappeared, a heavy thud on the floor below following instantly.

Hélène rushed forward and looked down.

It was difficult to pierce the gloom of the lower chamber, but the girl could discern that the men both lived and were facing each other apparently unhurt.

The loose forage scattered over the stone floor had broken their fall, and the elastic and bony frame of the notary, who fell undermost, had received little injury save a severe shaking, while the shock had compelled him to loosen his grip of Georges' throat, the latter immediately taking advantage of release to regain his feet.

As he did so his foot struck against some hard substance, which he immediately grasped. It was the flail handle which Cochart had used as the lever in hurling down the wall.

The dandy brandished the stout ashen weapon exultantly. He was now armed and could hold his own, for Georges was an excellent fencer and the mysteries of the bâton brisé were known to him.

The semi-obscure permitted the men to observe each other's movements, and Georges saw that Cochart was stealthily advancing.

"Back, scélérat!" shouted Georges, "back! or I'll break your villainous old head and every bone in your ugly carcase!"

"I may return the compliment with a steel draught, faquin et vaurien!" muttered the notary, savagely.

Young Grandet knew well both the slang of the Quartier-Latin and of the "tapis-franc," and was aware that the phrase used meant among the assassins and criminals who employed it a poignard stroke.

Thus forewarned, he perceived that the notary held a slender blade of tapering steel in his right hand—a Venetian stiletto, which he had been unable to produce from its hiding-place during the previous struggle.

"Ah, you are learned in the slang of the forçats," replied Georges, with cold contempt.

"It fits you well, for the hulks are your proper place. Come on!"

But the notary was not eager to accept the defiance. He knew well that his weapon was only useful at close quarters. Besides which, the fall had somewhat cooled his mad passions, and he was already regretting the precipitancy which threatened to bring ruin on schemes planned long since and carried forward with the persistent patience of the sleuth-hound on a trail.

"Stay, Georges Grandet!" said Cochart,

slowly. "There is perhaps no need that you should kill me or I slay you—at present," he added, in an undertone. "Friends we can never be, but this quarrel may stop short of the death of either. At any rate, a duel à outrance is not becoming in a lady's presence. I propose a truce—peace!"

"By an almost imperceptible movement he drew nearer to the Parisian.

"Keep your distance, man," replied Georges, sternly. "I trust no traitors. But if you desire a truce let it be so. I told you before that I did not wish to deprive the menials at the château of the pleasure they will feel in using their whip-thongs on your parchment skin."

Cochart grated his teeth vindictively, but replied:

"That they will never do."

"Indeed!" replied Georges, with a sneer.

"To-morrow morning we'll see about that. Perhaps you suppose the marquis will think lightly of your attempted murder of his kinsman and your daring insolence to his daughter. Ciel!" he continued, with a sudden access of passion, "when I think of your audacious conduct towards that lady my anger can scarce be repressed. Begone, and at once!"

And he raised the heavy weapon menacingly.

"Listen to reason," replied the notary. "Remember I can also tell my story. What are the facts that I should have to lay before the marquis? That I discover an assignation between Mademoiselle D'Aubion—the affianced bride of another man—and yourself! Ah, you start! you realise what the proud old seigneur will say when he finds that his daughter, forgetting what her position demands, arranges a meeting with a man of gal—"

He broke off as Georges advanced threateningly, and concluded:

"—with her cousin, a pious young Parisian. What will he say to Monsieur Georges?"

"You are right, scoundrel though you are," returned the young man, moodily. "It will be a deathblow to every hope of happiness for me. I shall never be permitted to see your face again, Hélène," he said, sadly, as he turned a rapid, fervid look up to the girl's pale features as she stood in the moonlit space above. "Yet I will speak my own sentence of eternal banishment from you, Hélène, rather than leave this wretch here unpunished and in power."

Cochart listened with a cynical smile.

"Bah! you will not be the only sufferer, Monsieur Georges. You think the marquis will believe your story, forbid you the house and expel me from it. Ah! but how about Mademoiselle Hélène? When I tell the proud old man that I found you here, that you threw down the ladder, that at peril of my life I scaled the tower, that you strove to kill me, and that both Mademoiselle D'Aubion and yourself vowed you would tell your story and procure my ruin and disgrace—how then? I will tell you. Mademoiselle Hélène will pass her life henceforward in a convent's gloom, Monsieur Georges Grandet will be dismissed with contumely—and the humble Jacques Cochart will receive the thanks he so well deserves. What say you?"

Georges made no reply. The fiendish malignancy of the man paralysed his speech.

"There is one other thing," continued Cochart, who saw the impression he had made. "The marquis cannot do without me—cannot! mark that well—and, still more, he dare not do without me!—mark that well also—dare not! I may say this, as we are a family party."

And he indulged in a hideous cachinnation.

As if in answer a hollow groan stole through the building, exciting a strange terror in Hélène's breast and an unpleasant tremour even in Georges' heart.

Cochart did not appear to notice it, and, finding that the young man made no answer, resumed:

"Come, I bear no malice, Monsieur Grandet. It's partly from that and partly because I don't want to have an unpleasant discussion to-morrow that I say this. If you and Mademoiselle D'Aubion will agree to observe secrecy respect-

ing the events of this night I will do the same. Mind! you risk more than I if you refuse."

"Promise, Georges," whispered Hélène, "and oh, take me away from this terrible place."

"Kiss your crucifix, mademoiselle," cried the notary, with a sneer. "I know that vow will be binding. Then throw it down and let Monsieur Grandet do the same. These fast men are a superstitious lot," he added to himself, contemptuously.

The girl threw down the little golden symbol, which Georges was about to press to his lips when, in frantic, piercing accents, Hélène suddenly exclaimed:

"Fly, Georges, fly! the loft is falling!"

The next instant the heavy oaken framework with the terrified girl thereon fell bodily to the bottom of the tower!

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

PROPERTIES OF THE HUMAN GASTRIC JUICE.

—According to Professor Verneuil's researches, the acidity of the gastric juice is equivalent to 1·7 grammes of hydrochloric acid to 1,000 grammes of fluid. The acidity increases a little at the end of digestion. Wine and alcohol also increases it, but cane sugar diminishes it. It tends to return to its normal acidity after the introduction of acid or alkaline matters. The mean duration of digestion is from three to four and a half hours, and the food does not pass gradually out of the stomach, but in masses. According to four analyses, after a modification of Schmidt's method, free hydrochloric acid exists in the gastric juice; and altogether this secretion appears to consist of one part of lactic acid to nine parts of hydrochloric acid, the former of which is free in the gastric juice. The nature, therefore, of the free acid in the stomach seems almost solved, and it may be said that in every 1,000 grammes of the juice there are 1·53 grains of hydrochloric acid and 0·43 of lactic acid.

SPECTRUM OF CANDLE AND GAS LIGHTS.

—With the aid of the spectral photometer MM. Vogel and Muller have examined the most common sources of light with regard to their intensity in different parts of the spectrum, and have reached the following, among other results: The light of a wax candle is in the blue weaker than that of the stearin and paraffin candle. Petroleum shows in blue greater intensity than oil. A petroleum lamp with the wick newly cut emits more blue and violet rays than when it has burnt some time. A gas flame is in red and blue and violet brighter than a petroleum flame. The individual parts of flames which show a considerable difference as to total intensity differ but little with regard to different parts of the spectrum. A petroleum lamp emits more refrangible rays than a Silber oil lamp, but the reverse is the case with a Silber lamp burnt with petroleum, as compared with the same ordinary petroleum lamp. A comparison of a petroleum lamp with a Drummond limelight led to the result that the Drummond limelight has a considerably greater intensity in the spectrum from green downwards, this being even doubled in the blue and violet colours.

A NEW DISCOVERY OF POTASH FIELDS.—A deposit of potash salts has been discovered near Stassfurth, Germany, which is said to be so vast that it will yield these salts in sufficient quantity to supply the entire world for many years to come. The uses of potash salts in the arts are very numerous and important, and to obtain them recourse has been had to washing of sheep's wool, the liquor from which cane sugar is crystallised, and to sea water. The entire bed, the immense size of which was determined by borings made with the diamond drill, lies within the triangle formed by the three towns of Magdeburg, Halle, and Nordhausen, and is supposed to be due to the evaporation of an inland sea. The company, which is soon to begin working the mines, has obtained a concession of about 8 square miles.



[THE TWO BRIDES.]

A WOMAN SPURNED.

CHAPTER X.

*In the lists of Love never couch a lance
For eyes that brighten but to deceive;
But when sure of a heart in a love-fraught
glance,
Never rivals a chance in the tourney leave.*

THE morning of the bridal day dawned in cloudless lustre, much to the joy of one throbbing heart, at least, for there was a lurking superstition in that of Agnes which confirmed to her the truth of the poet's words:

Happy is the bride that the sun shines on.

In the bright glory of early morning, when the birds were jubilantly singing their matin songs, the dewdrops glittering in the first rays of the sun, and the soft summer breeze coming in wafts of delicious freshness from the flower-beds, a party of five persons awaited in the large parlour the appearance of the bride and groom.

These were the master and mistress of the house, the Reverend Mr. Hinton, who had come from town to perform the ceremony, and Mr. Kirke.

The last had been invited to be present because he was the most intimate friend of the family, and had evinced a warm regard for Agnes from her childhood.

He had not visited Selwood since the evening of his rejection by Emma, and the professor and his wife had scarcely expected him this morning.

When he appeared he said:

"My theory is, that 'as good fish are in the sea as have been caught from it,' according to the old proverb. I baited my hook for a siren—I suppose they must be fish, as they are fabled to rise from the water—and the fair deluder treated me as she is said to treat all her followers—plunged me in a cold bath, though she did not quite drown me. The experience brought

me to my senses, Mrs. Tardy, and I am as sane and sound to-day as if I had never passed through it."

"So much the better for us all," said the brisk little woman cheerfully; "but I had no idea that you were so much of a philosopher."

At that moment there was a slight stir among the domestics gathered around the door opening into the next room, and the bridal party entered.

Agnes, in a dove-coloured travelling dress with hat, gloves, and boots to match, looked bewitching in her youthful freshness, and Manvers was radiant in joyful triumph as he led her forward.

But after the first glance at the two all eyes were turned on the pair that followed them. Emma was magnificently dressed in a trailing robe of white satin covered with point lace, and on neck, arms, and brow glittered magnificent diamonds.

She had also thrown over her head a lace veil which covered nearly her whole person.

"I declare she looks more like the bride than Agnes does," exclaimed Mrs. Tardy, almost loud enough to be heard. "What vanity, what folly. I thought even Emma had more sense than to dress herself after that fashion, on an occasion like this."

But her surprise and disapprobation were destined to be still further increased, for when Manvers and his bride came forward to meet the clergyman, Brenton and his companion placed themselves beside them, and the same ceremony united both couples.

Those present looked at each other in stupefied silence while this went on.

Indignant as Mrs. Tardy might be at this underhanded proceeding, she knew that this was neither the time nor the place to show her displeasure.

Her niece was her own mistress, and had the right to marry without asking the consent of anyone; but she felt that both she and the professor had been treated with indignity by both parties to the contract clandestinely entered into

and completed before their eyes without a word of warning.

When the last words were spoken she and her husband approached Agnes, kissed, blessed, and wept a few tears over her—they lavished congratulations on Manvers, and claimed him for the son of their old age; but neither one seemed to be aware that another bride claimed some portion of their caresses.

Emma found herself standing alone with the man to whom she had just given herself, till Kirke stalked towards her and said:

"Allow me to offer my good wishes, Mrs. Brenton, and to say to your husband that I heartily forgive him for taking you from me, and congratulate both him and myself on his success. The surprise of this sudden marriage is so great, that I cannot find words to say more."

He bowed and drew back so rapidly that no reply could have been made, had Emma's rage allowed her to speak.

Agnes made the first diversion in her favour. She extracted herself from her uncle's embrace, and turning to Emma, kissed her and softly said:

"I do hope that you will be as happy in your hurried union as I hope to be in the one I have this day made. Dear uncle, dearest aunt, forgive Emma's dramatic surprise, and give her as good wishes on her matrimonial voyage as you have lavished on me."

Manvers was also by this time shaking hands with his partner, and saying all the kind things his warm heart prompted.

Emma's voice arose shrill and hard above all the rest as she addressed her aunt:

"I only wanted to break the monotony of this house by giving those in it an agreeable surprise, and this is the way it is received! I really think that I am shamefully treated by you, Aunt Sarah."

Mrs. Tardy frigidly said:

"In one sense the surprise is an agreeable one, Emma, for by your marriage I get rid of the responsibility of so wilful and inconsiderate

a charge as you are. As to my husband and myself, we both wish you well, but we cannot forget how completely you have ignored us throughout this affair. Of Mr. Brenton's share in this slight I prefer to say nothing, as I cannot compliment him on his ideas of propriety!"

Brenton made a faint effort to apologise and explain the part he had taken, but his bride cut his words short by saying:

"It was my will, and I made him accede to my whim as the price of my consent to marry him. I wished to make a sensation, and upon my word I think I have succeeded!"

And she looked triumphantly around. Brenton felt that he had played a sorry part in this surprise wedding, but for that he cared little enough, since he had won the stakes for which he was contending.

He had secured a rich wife, and let fortune deal with him as the fickle jade might in the future, he was always sure of abundance, and even more than that, when the life of Mrs. Tardy no longer stood in the way of the accession of her niece to the estate he began to covet with all the greed of his nature.

The small party gathered around the sumptuous table which had been set out in honour of the adopted daughter of the house, but the old lady indignantly felt that Emma had contrived to poison the festival as well as the one of the betrothal.

Even the professor, the most unsuspicious of men, said to himself:

"She has a spite against my darling because her aunt loves her best; but how can she help it when Agnes does all she can to contribute to our happiness, and Emma is only a care and a worry? For my part I am not sorry she is going, although she has chosen to leave us in so shameful a manner."

The clergyman found himself placed in a very embarrassing position, for, until minutes before he entered the parlour to await the appearance of the bridal couples, he had not been aware that his services would be demanded by more than one.

Brenton had hurriedly explained to him that he had decided to be married at the same time with his friend, and stated that a license had been procured on the previous day.

Mrs. Tardy seized the first opportunity to whisper to Agnes:

"How long before you came downstairs did you know of Emma's intention to be married at the same time you were? If she had not kept it secret till the last possible moment, I know that you would have warned me."

"You are quite right, aunt. I had no suspicion of her intention till a few moments before Julian came for me. Emma came into my room in full toilet, and hurriedly announced her determination to take the family by surprise, and have her wedding over before there could be any gossip about it."

"There was no time to let you know what was coming. Emma kept guard over the door, declaring that I should not get out before Julian came for me. When he came Mr. Brenton was with him, and both looked flushed and annoyed. They had evidently had some sharp words together, but Julian only said, as he drew my arm under his:

"You know what is about to take place, Agnes; it is a shameful disrespect to your uncle and aunt, but it is too late to make a scene now. Emma will have her way, let what will come of it."

"Then we came down, and I must say that I was more frightened on Emma's account than on my own, though I was nervous enough before she came to my room. She looks on the whole thing as a good piece of fun, but when she sees how much you are hurt by her treatment I am sure she will be sorry that she did not tell you beforehand."

Mrs. Tardy shook her head doubtfully. "It is not in her nature to care for the feelings of others."

"Dear aunt, judge both of them as leniently as you can," said Agnes affectionately. "Julian thinks highly of his partner, and strangely as he

has acted this morning, Mr. Brenton may prove a comfort to you yet, and bring you and Emma nearer together."

"May—well—yes, you were right to put it in doubtful phrase," and Mrs. Tardy snapped her lips together with their most decisive expression of doubt.

A waiter was sent up to Emma with a sumptuous feast upon it, but she rejected all except a cup of coffee and a biscuit, the want of which she felt, though she had little appetite.

When the servant had gone back at her own command, leaving the tray on the table, she took into her hand the large slice of bridal cake, sent up with the rest, and viciously crumbled it between her fingers, vindictively muttering:

"May your sweetness be turned to bitterness—your lightness to heaviness, your whiteness to the darkness of despair, to those for whom you were made. I lay my ban upon the marriage in whose honour you were so daintily prepared, and may the infernal gods bring to it ruin and shame. I have uttered my malediction, and all that human will can accomplish shall be done by me to cause it to fall. Go on your way, Julian Manvers, exultant and hopeful, bearing with you the bride for whose baby face you slighted me, but the day shall come in which you will know that it had been better for you than died than to have brought upon yourself my relentless hatred."

Brenton came to the door, tapped lightly upon it, and then entered without further ceremony.

"You will surely come down with me now, my dear Emma. They are all in the vestibule, the carriages are at the door, and in five minutes more they will be on their way to the train."

Emma icily said:

"I have already told you that I would not go down, and I am surprised that you should come after me again. Go back yourself if you choose and give this message to those love-sick idiots about to embark on a voyage they foolishly think is to prove all sunshine. Tell them that if I could enlist Macbeth's witches in my service I would cause them to raise such a storm against them as would wreck their bark at once with all its freight of happiness and hope."

Her face was deadly pale except on the centre of each cheek, where bloomed a spot of rose which only served to render her ghostly pallor more striking, and her voice, in its low intensity, sounded more like the hiss of a serpent than the utterance of human lips.

Brenton shuddered, feeling as if a sudden douche of ice water had been thrown over him, but the reaction came almost immediately in a surge of passion, and he furiously exclaimed:

"You are in love with Manvers, though you have given your hand to me; yet you swore to me that such preference as you once might have felt for him was but in the superior attraction which drew you towards me. Madame, I demand of you an explanation of your singular words and manner."

Emma turned her gleaming eyes upon him, and slowly said:

"You must be a very poor judge of human nature if you think I love Julian Manvers now. Do you think that women like me ever forgive a slight, or cease to seek the means to avenge it? I regard that man and woman who have plighted their faith to each other this morning with a far more deadly hatred than you can ever conceive. I will repay him for all I owe him, and in doing so strike a death-blow to her happiness; and you are the agent through whom I intend to accomplish this. I accepted you for that purpose, and you have sworn to do my bidding! This is our bridal day. I like you well enough, though I never pretended to be desperately in love with you. Choose this hour between your friend and me. The service I demand is, to ruin him, to blast him for ever, to crush him so completely that he can never dare to raise his head among honourable men again! Do that, and I give you love, happiness, even submission to your will, imperious as I am by nature! Shrink from it, and you may go—I care not whither."

No wife of yours will I ever be, and the hurried ceremony of this morning shall be set aside as the act of one suffering from temporary insanity!"

Brenton listened to this long address like one stupefied.

"What manner of woman was this?" he asked himself. "And into what gulf of infamy was she requiring him to plunge as the price of holding her to the vows he had so recently made?"

He was not an honourable man himself.

He was a schemer who was ready to advance his own interests at the expense of others, but the wickedness developed in Emma's last words was something so stupendous and unexpected, that he fairly lost his head.

He stood staring helplessly at her, as if unable to comprehend the meaning of her words.

She stamped her foot passionately upon the floor, and imperiously cried:

"Speak! give me your decision at once. I will have no hesitation in a matter so vital to me. Help me to destroy those two who go forth from this house to-day exulting in their happiness, and I pledge myself to be all that a wife should be to her husband. Refuse—hesitate even as to the course you will adopt, and I swear to you that I am lost to you for ever!"

Colour had come back to her face; her eyes glowed with the passion that thrilled her frame, and to Brenton there was something fascinating in the boldness with which she proclaimed her purpose, and demanded his assistance in carrying it out.

That she was in deadly earnest he could not doubt, and that any hesitation on his part would lead to a rupture between them he clearly saw.

To give her up when she had just proclaimed herself even more unscrupulous than he was himself—thus claiming near kindred with his own dark and tortuous nature—seemed impossible.

She charmed him irresistibly in displaying this phrase of her character, which harmonised so completely with his own.

He drew near her, fixed his glowing eyes upon hers, and taking her hand between his own, said:

"I know that I have been fortunate enough to win a charming woman, but I did not before suspect that I had married a heroine capable of forming plans and carrying them out in defiance of the world's opinion. We are of the same metal, my Emma, and together we may defy the world, and snatch from it all that we care to enjoy. Together, we can defy fate—divided, each one would be a failure. I recognise my mate, and claim her as my very own."

Brenton would have taken her in his arms, but she stepped back, and regarding him with a searching glance, slowly asked:

"By those words do you pledge yourself to all I demand? Will you enter heart and soul into my plans, and aid me with all your power to accomplish them? Only on those terms will I allow you to approach me as one who has a right to caress me."

Brenton fervently replied:

"I swear to you that you fascinate me to that degree that I would risk all which men most prize to do your bidding. I sacrifice to you the friend of years—the associate of my boyhood; but that is nothing when by so doing I gain the mastery over such a spirit as yours. We are kindred souls, Emma Crofton, and belong by right of affinity to each other."

"It is a compact, then."

And with a long, sibilant sigh she sank into his arms, and received without resistance, the kisses he imprinted on her brow and lips.

Suddenly extricating herself from his embrace she stood erect, and listened to the sound of approaching footsteps.

"Hark! someone is coming! I know that light tread. It is Agnes coming to bid me adieu, since I will not go down to her. Now you shall see how I can play my part, for neither she nor her Julian must suspect that in us they have found their most deadly foes."

A hurried knock came to the door, and Agnes breathlessly said when it was opened:

"I have not a moment to stay, Emma, but I could not go without saying good-bye. Julian would not come up, for he thinks you have treated us badly; but on this day, above all others, I could not bear to cherish unkind feeling toward any human creature. You have not wished me happiness yet, Emma, but I hope you care enough for me to wish me well."

Emma threw her arms around the speaker, and kissing her lightly upon the cheek, said:

"I have been shamefully remiss, then, and I beg your pardon, Agnes. Words are poor to express all that I feel, therefore I will not attempt it. I could not come down after the scene in the parlour this morning; my aunt must make me some amends for her harsh language, before we can meet as friends. I have consented to stay, because it suits me to do so, and I have the right to remain in this house as long as I choose."

Agnes drew back from her, hurt and indignant on Mrs. Tardy's account.

She hastily said:

"I must go, now, as we have barely time to reach the train in time. When I return I hope that I shall find you all reconciled, and living in harmony together. Try to fill my place to aunt and uncle, Emma, for I fear they will miss me sadly."

She extended her hand to Brenton, but Emma said with her false smile:

"Mr. Brenton will go down with you, dear, and say all that is necessary to Mr. Manvers on my behalf. Farewell, Agnes; enjoy your honeymoon, for it is apt to be the one drop of sweetness in the career of a married woman."

"You say that, and yet you are just married yourself!" exclaimed Agnes, with comic horror. "Oh, Emma!"

"I am not romantic, and I see things so clearly that I am not likely to suffer from the disappointment of overwrought expectations. You are different, and you will suffer in having your illusions dissipated."

"Just hear her! how can you allow her to talk after that fashion, Mr. Brenton? But I must go—I hear Julian calling from below. Au revoir, dear Emma; be happy in your new estate—as happy as I hope to be, and you will soon abjure such heresy as you have just uttered."

She flitted away, closely followed by Brenton, and Emma stood looking after them with curling lips and flaring eyes.

"Yes, be happy," she muttered. "I allow you a brief dream of bliss, only that you may contrast it with the darkness which shall clothe all the later days of your life. Drink the brimming cup presented to your lips, but the lees shall be bitter with the ingredients I intend to mix with the delicious draught."

She left her own apartments, crossed the hall, and entered the room over the vestibule.

This was fitted up as a library, and lighted by a single large window in front, which filled up half the wall.

On the drive below stood two carriages, the horses impatiently stamping and chafing at the delay in setting out.

On the platform, in front of the steps, Agnes was the centre of a group, divided between smiles and tears, as they gave her up to her new career.

Emma looked down with bitter heart-burning, and saw her tear herself away and enter the foremost carriage, followed by Manvers.

A chorus of good wishes, backed by a flight of old shoes, followed them from the domestics and the people employed on the place.

The clergyman who had officiated entered the phaeton, and Mr. Kirke took his place beside him, intending to see the young couple fairly embarked on their journey, and then return to report to the professor and his wife.

Brenton went back to Emma, bearing with him a conciliatory message from the professor, which was reluctantly assented to by Mrs. Tardy; she was too deeply offended by her niece's conduct to be appeased; but finally peace was made on a hollow foundation, but it sufficed for the present, and neither Brenton nor his bride cared for more.

They talked long and earnestly together, and the plan Emma had weighed in her own mind, and determined on as the best for her purpose, was sketched to Brenton, and, with some modifications, adopted by him.

What that was future events will develop.

CHAPTER XL.

Experience is sure to teach,
The more as more you live,
That he who gives the most advice
Has little else to give.

THE train was several hours behind time, on account of some trifling casualty on the road, by which one man only was killed and two more crippled for life; but that was a mere bagatelle to other railroad accidents on record, and people only said:

"It is lucky it was no worse."

But to Agnes few things could have been more dreadful than a fatal collision occurring on that most blessed of all days of her life, upon the road she was about to travel over.

Kirke drew near them, and in his matter-of-fact way said:

"You ought to thank your stars that the collision took place before you got in the train. To my mind it is an omen of good fortune, for it assures you that your guardian angels keeps a bright look-out to extricate you from all dangers that may threaten you, Mrs. Manvers."

While the conversation went on Manvers had turned to one of the railroad officials, and after speaking with him a few moments, said to his companions:

"It will be several hours before the train comes, and we had better go to the hotel and order dinner. Kirke and Mr. Hinton shall be our invited guests, and we will have a good time in spite of this delay."

The fair bride had many friends in the little city, and several of them who were aware of the intended marriage that morning, and of the unlucky detention in town, came to call on her during the interval of waiting.

More than one invitation to luncheon was given, but all were declined with thanks, as it was necessary to remain as near the station as possible.

At two o'clock an exquisite little dinner was served to the party in their own parlour, and half-an-hour later a messenger came to say that the belated train would be at the station in twenty minutes.

The whole party walked down to meet it, and took their places, while Kirke stood outside the window and talked with them to the last moment.

But two passengers alighted—an elderly man belonging to the town, and a young woman in half mourning, who looked nervous and half alarmed at the noise and confusion around her. As she was stepping forward, a man, in a hurry, ran violently against her, and she would have fallen had not Kirke started forward and caught her in his arms.

She accepted the water he gave her, and, after a few moments, turned on him a pair of large, dark eyes, and gratefully said:

"Many thanks, sir, for your kindness. But for your prompt assistance I might have been severely hurt. The pain was intense for a few moments, but I do not think that my ankle is badly sprained. Oh, if it had been, what a misfortune it would have been to me at this time."

She looked to be twenty-three or four years of age, and there was a shade of sadness over her expressive face which told plainly enough that she belonged to that great sisterhood of baffled hopes and unflagging effort of which most large cities are full.

There was something indefinably attractive to Kirke in the whole appearance of this stranger so suddenly thrown upon his care, and he said to himself:

"Now, here is a woman worth twenty such highfliers as Emma Crofton, and she is one who evidently has to fight her own battle with life. I wonder who she is, and what I can do to help

her, if she wants help? She looks as if she's in a strait of some kind."

Then speaking aloud, he said:

"I am glad that I was near you, miss, and I hope that you are not severely hurt. Are you quite sure that you can walk upon your injured foot? If not, I have a carriage near, and I will be happy to take you to your destination. My name is Kirke—James Kirke, at your service."

"I can depend on my own judgment in this case, I think, Mr. Kirke, for your face is a thoroughly honest and good one. Thanks for your offer, but I am going several miles beyond this place, and if you will add to your other kindness by getting some conveyance for me, I shall be quite able to go upon my way. My foot may need care for a few days, but I think I can stand on it without much pain."

"Going into the country," said Kirke after a pause. "Perhaps I can take you to the place you wish to go to, as I am going out of town myself. In what direction does your road lie?"

"I do not know. I am quite a stranger in this part of the country, but I had to come to—to see a lady living a few miles from here, to—to let her know something that is important to herself."

She paused, and a painful flush covered her whole face, extending even to the fluted ruffle that lay against her slender throat.

"Tell me the name of the lady," said Kirke, gently, "and I may be able to direct you to her, if I cannot take you to her abode."

"Miss Crofton is the lady I am seeking, and she is living at a place called Selwood, I have been told."

At this statement her companion looked at her with surprise and deep interest.

He possessed too much innate refinement to question her as to the source of her interest in Emma, so he simply said:

"It is fortunate that I can take you to the place you wish to go to, as I am at present a guest of Professor Tardy's; but the lady you spoke of is no longer Miss Crofton. She was married this morning to Mr. Joseph Brenton, a young merchant."

"Married!" repeated the young woman, sitting erect, and growing pale again. "Joseph Brenton married, and without a word to—to—"

She paused abruptly, covered her face with her hands, and sat still and silent so long that Kirke began to feel uncomfortable, and wish that fate would not deal so unkindly with him as to be always getting him into some entanglement in which women were concerned.

But his curiosity was intensely aroused, and after a long pause, he said:

The engagement was a brief one, and the marriage so sudden that it took Miss Crofton's family by surprise. If you think it necessary to see her now, I am quite ready to take you to Selwood, and the sooner we set out the better, as it is getting late in the day."

She removed her hands from her face, and looking him clearly in the eyes, said in low, steady tones:

"Although you are so utter a stranger to me, Mr. Kirke, it seemed necessary for me to take you, to a certain extent, into my confidence. It is too late now to warn Mrs. Brenton against the man she has married, but I have business with him that must be settled. I shall be glad to avail myself of your offer to take me to Selwood, and I can turn to this place in time to go back by the night train. I must tell you something of myself that you may not be quite in the dark as to the person you are so kindly befriending. I am Constance Deering, and I support myself by colouring photographs. My father has been dead a year, and I am alone in the world. He had a few hundred pounds which were trusted to Mr. Brenton to speculate with. He has been successful, I know from others, but since my father's death he has refused to settle with me under the plea that it was papa's wish that I should not only give him my money, but myself into the bargain."

She paused a moment, and then went on more earnestly:

"I reflected on my course, and decided to let Miss Crofton know how treacherous a man her lover is, and after that force him to give me back at least the sum that was entrusted to his hands. After that is done we shall be strangers to each other, through all time, I hope."

This straightforward and clear explanation charmed Kirke.

Here was one woman who could speak out frankly, and trust to be believed by an honest man, he thought, and hastened to say:

"I think the course you have taken is the right one, Miss Deering; that is, so far as the lady is concerned; as to the settlement with Brenton, you must be guided by your own judgment as to what will be best for your interests. You are too late to warn Mrs. Brenton of her husband's rascality; but you go on to Selwood, the fear that you may betray his double dealing may induce her husband to do what is right by you."

"That is what has occurred to me, and I will avail myself of your kind offer to take me there. I must see Mr. Brenton once more, and it will be better for me to meet him where others will be near to protect me from his violence, for more than once he has used very harsh language to me when I pressed him for payment of the sum my poor father would entrust to him in spite of all the opposition I could offer. The money was earned and hoarded by my mother herself; she was a good musician, and aware that papa could not lay by anything from his salary as a clerk, she gave lessons, and saved four hundred pounds. At her death, four years ago, it fell into my father's possession, and he let Mr. Brenton have the use of it, with the compact that half of such gains as were realised were to come to him, together with the original sum loaned. Mr. Brenton deluded him with the belief that he was making a fortune for me from his small venture, and he died with the belief that I was well provided for."

"Hem—it is a common story of trust abused. I hardly think it could have been much worse. But we will not discuss Brenton. I do not like him, and human nature is prone to judge harshly under such circumstance. If you think you are able to walk to the carriage, Miss Deering, I think we had better go at once. The family at Selwood must be wondering at my long delay here."

Constance rose at once.

(To be Continued.)

GLORIA;

OR,

MARRIED IN RAGE.

CHAPTER LI.

In the back office of a large music shop in the Strand two gentlemen were seated at a small table covered with a green cloth and laden with printed and written papers and writing materials.

These two were John Servant, the philanthropist and lecturer, and Jesse Barnes his agent.

And this was the principal place where tickets for his lecture were to be sold.

John Servant was a tall and well-proportioned man, but his form was thin almost to gauntness. His head was nobly shaped, and his features fine, but his face was thin, and his complexion pale. Beautiful black, silky hair fell in slight curls around his head, and a full, black, silky beard covered the lower part of his face and flowed down upon his chest. His eyes were large, and very dark, with a profundity of thought and feeling in their depths. He used glasses now, for those beautiful eyes had been overtasked in the service of mankind, and their vision was somewhat impaired.

He wore a plain but perfectly fresh suit of

coarse grey tweed, and snow-white linen, not over fine, and a common silver watch, with a black braid guard.

His companion was an elderly man with a short stature, stout form, half bald head, and a fair, full, intelligent, and good natured countenance.

"Have you done well to put the price of tickets up so high to all parts of the house? Half a guinea is a large figure."

"I know it, and I put the tickets up to that price purposely. Do you know how the Commissioners of the Crystal Palace do? They have their shilling day, their half-a-crown day, and their half-a-guinea day. Now, there is quite as much to be seen on the shilling day as on the half-crown day; but their motive is to accommodate all classes. The shilling day suits the poor who could not pay a higher rate. The half-a-crown day suits a well-to-do class who would rather pay more than double than go into a large, miscellaneous crowd that collects there on the shilling day. I have taken a lesson from the Commissioners of the Crystal Palace."

As John Servant spoke, the melody and beauty of his modulated voice must have surprised anyone not so familiar with its music as was his friend and agent, Jesse Barnes.

"I do not see how you apply the rule of tariff governing admission into the Crystal Palace to your lectures," said the latter.

"I will explain," replied John Servant. "When I first began to speak in public, my lectures, as you know, were free, except when they were put at some low figure for the benefit of some charity."

"Yes, I know; and never for your own benefit."

"Now, listen. I observed that whether my lectures were free or at a low price, the halls were filled to overflowing with the very class of poor and destitute for whom I live and labour, and whom I often wish to address particularly, yet whose crowding the hall on occasions when I have to address the wealthy and influential in their behalf, excludes the very class to which I wish to appeal. This defeats the object of the lecture."

"I see."

"This afternoon I speak for the helpless and destitute children. I wish to speak to the wealthy and influential classes. I have therefore put the tickets up to a price that will insure them from being jostled by their poor 'unwashed' brethren and sisters. The fund raised by the sale of tickets must be religiously devoted to the relief of the ragged schools."

"Do you think that you will fill the hall at that price?"

"I do not think I shall speak to empty benches; but I do not know that I shall fill the hall. It is an experiment, Mr. Barnes. Tomorrow I give my free lecture, 'The Home of the Working Man.'"

"My friend," began Mr. Barnes, in a grave, affectionate tone.

John Servant looked up from some notes he was engaged upon.

"Will you let me give you some counsel in blunt, John Bull fashion?" inquired Jesse Barnes.

"Certainly, with thanks," replied the younger man.

"Well, then, I would advise you not to give so many free lectures; to levy a slight tariff, at least, upon your multitudes of hearers, and not to devote all the proceeds of your work to public charities."

"Thanks, Mr. Barnes, for your kind counsel; but let me ask, what would you have me do with my 'proceeds'?"

"Lay up some of the money for yourself. 'The labourer is worthy of his hire.'"

"Why do you give me this advice, good friend?"

"For your own sake—that you, who are just and merciful to all mankind, may be a little good to yourself."

"But I do not need the money, while the causes to which I devote it do."

"You are not rich, I know."

The young lecturer smiled; he had a pecu-

liarily deep, beautiful smile—while his mentor continued:

"You lodge plainly, feed plainly, dress plainly," he added, involuntarily glancing over the coarse grey tweed suit, the not very fine linen, and the cheap silver watch of John Servant.

"Cleanliness and comfort is all I require in lodging and dress; healthy nutrition is all I need in food," replied the philanthropist.

"And that is cheap enough to be easily procured by one who is not rich. But, my dear friend, you should begin to lay up some provision for your future, for if you are not rich, you are also not young."

John Servant smiled his deep, beautiful smile, as he inquired:

"How old do you take me to be?"

"Well, I should say, getting well on towards forty years."

"Yes, I am getting on towards forty, but not very fast. I was twenty-eight on my last birthday, the fourth of July."

"Eh! Why you look ten or fifteen years older than that! You think too much, feel too much, work too much, and live too much in a given time not to grow old and die early. Not more than twenty-eight! Why, then, my dear friend, there is another reason why you should lay up money for the future. You may marry."

"No," gravely and somewhat sadly replied the lecturer. "I shall never marry. My mission—my work must be wife and children to me. I am alone, and I expect to live and die alone."

"And that dying alone may come sooner than you expect, unless you are kinder to yourself," said Jesse Barnes, touched by the sadness of the young missionary's tone as well as by the paleness of his face.

"I do not crave that my life should be long, but only that it shall be full of good uses."

"That it is sure to be; but as to this experiment of yours to-night, I hope it may succeed; but I don't feel sure. Half a guinea is a high price. Well, it is time to go to the hall."

"Yes, it is. The doors will open in half an hour, and there are some details to be attended to on the spot before I shall be prepared to present myself to the audience," said John Servant, as he and his agent collected and rolled up the printed and written papers on the table and arose to leave the room.

They passed into the front shop, where the vendor of music and—for the time being—the seller of tickets stood behind the counter.

"Well, Mr. Simcox, how go the sales? Many tickets sold? Many left on hand?" inquired the agent, as he stopped for a moment before the counter, while John Servant, standing by his side, listened with interest, though he said nothing.

"Oh, the sales have been brisk," brightly replied the music-seller. "You saw that strange-looking person go out here just now?"

"Yes," answered John Servant; "a black man, in grey and silver livery."

"The same. Well, sir, that 'native' bought twenty tickets."

"Twenty tickets!" echoed John Servant and Jesse Barnes, in a breath.

"Yes, sir, twenty tickets, for which he paid me down in ten golden sovereigns and ten silver shillings. Here they are. I have not even showed them in the drawer yet," said the music vendor, as he pointed to the little heap of gold and silver coins lying on the counter.

"For whom did the man take them, I wonder?" inquired the agent.

"That was what I wondered, too. I wondered so much that I asked the 'native'—who, I must say, spoke the language as well as an Englishman—and he told me they were for his mistress and her aunt."

"That was not very satisfactory information," said the agent.

"So I thought, and I asked him who his mistress was, and he told me without the least hesitation."

"Who was she?" inquired the agent.

"You will be surprised to learn," answered the music-vendor.

But at that instant his discourse was cut short by the entrance of two men, one of whom bought two tickets and the other four.

When they had retired the agent returned to the previous question.

"Well, who was this lady whose name is going to surprise us so much?" he inquired.

"It will surprise you, I can tell you that," reiterated the music-vendor.

"Was she one of the royal princesses? But no; one of the royal princesses would scarcely have sent a 'native' on such an errand, even if she had had one in her train. I give it up. Who was the man? Who was she?" demanded the agent, with a show of real or feigned impatience.

As for John Servant, he looked on and listened with a curiosity none the less intense because it was silent and patient, for he felt very desirous to know the name of one who had taken a sufficient interest in his cause to buy ten guineas' worth of tickets.

"Who is she, man? Who is she?" vehemently demanded the agent.

But the music-vendor had taken up that day's copy of the "Court Journal," and he was diligently looking down the list of names of the ladies who had attended the Queen's drawing-room on the previous day.

"I cannot recall the whole name, though I remember part of it. It was the name of—Have you seen the account of the drawing-room in to-day's 'Court Journal?' the agent broke off to ask.

"No."

Neither John Servant nor Jesse Barnes had had time to look at it.

"Well, I did, while waiting for customers. And the incident of the day seemed to be the presentation of a young and beautiful West Indian widow, about whom I happened to be reading at the moment the 'native' came in to buy the twenty tickets. Well, my mind was diverted from its interest in the beautiful countess by the sudden curiosity I felt to know who the lady was who wanted twenty tickets! So you may judge my surprise when the man named the very lady who had just been engaging my thoughts!"

"But bless my life and soul, you have not told us who she was," exclaimed Jesse Barnes, beginning to lose patience in downright earnest.

"I told you I could not remember her whole name; only a part of it. It is a foreign name, of course. I must find it in this list. Ah! here it is. Here is the name of the lady who loves your cause enough to invest ten guineas in one lecture."

"Well," exclaimed John Servant and Jesse Barnes, simultaneously.

The music dealer fixed his glass in his eye and read:

"The Countess Gloria De la Vera."

"Hallo! what's this? What ails you, man? Good heavens, Simcox! A glass of water here! He is dying! I have thought for a long time he would go off in that way!" exclaimed the agent, as John Servant suddenly dropped into a chair and turned white as death.

The water was quickly brought and offered; but before it came the man had conquered himself, had risen from his chair, and now stood erect by the counter.

"I know what has caused this. You haven't eaten a morsel since breakfast, and then only a small bowl of oatmeal porridge. Pah! And now you were going right on to the lecture-room, without stopping to take lunch! Come, come on now, and we'll go to 'Simpson's,' and have a stiffening bowl of green turtle soup. There will be time enough to get everything through at the hall before the hour for which the lecture is announced. And look here! You will have to see a medical man about your state of health. This weakness has been growing on you ever since I knew you. It must be seen to immediately. It must indeed," said the agent, as he drew the pale missionary's arm within his own and took him from the shop and called a hansom that was passing to take them to Simpson's.

Half-an-hour later the same cab took the lecturer and his agent to Exeter Hall.

"Now, what on earth are you going to do with all these tickets, Gloria?" inquired Miss De Crespiigny, when Ganymede, their footman, brought the packet into their private parlour, where they sat over an early lunch.

"Do you see this pile of envelopes? They are directed to various acquaintances—the members of the minister's family, and to several of the ladies and gentlemen we met at their house."

"Well?"

"I shall put those tickets into these envelopes with my card and compliments, and send Ganymede in a cab to deliver them immediately."

"It is late to do so. The recipients will only just have time to dress and get there before the lecture begins."

"I can't help that, aunty! I got them as soon as ever I could! I did not get a sight of the advertisement until I came down to breakfast, and I sent off Ganymede immediately to buy the tickets, and now I shall send him off instantly to deliver them," said Gloria, who had lost no time while she talked, but had placed tickets in the envelopes and was now closing up the last one but two, which she had reserved for her aunt and herself.

She gave them, when she had finished, to Ganymede, with particular directions for their quick delivery, and despatched him on his errand.

Next she rang for a hotel waiter to take away the lunch service.

Then she looked at her watch and said:

"It is half-past one, aunty. The lecture does not begin until half-past three. We have two hours."

"Well, that is abundance of time for you and me, child, but how about those ladies who will not get the tickets you send them for an hour or more? They will hardly have time to dress, even if they should care to go."

"Oh, aunty, people do not need to dress to go to a lecture at Exeter Hall. The home dress, with addition of bonnet, shawl, and gloves, which can all be put on in five minutes, is all that is necessary," said Gloria.

"I wonder whatever did possess the man to deliver his lecture in the broad daylight instead of night, which would have given people so much more time to prepare?" asked Miss De Crespiigny, testily.

"Aunty, I think I can answer that question as well as John Servant could himself if he were here present. Through newspaper reports, criticisms, and reviews of him, his writings and lectures, I have followed him so closely in all his works and ways that I seem to know and understand his mind and motives."

"Humph!" said Miss De Crespiigny.

"This, you know, is his celebrated lecture on children—'The Destitute Children of the Poor' which he has delivered in every city through which he has passed. I have read so many reviews of this very lecture—and all of them, hitherto, with one regret: that the labours of this beloved apostle of the poor were defeated in their object by the very class for whom he worked, and by whom he was idolised."

"But how could that be?"

"I am going to tell you. These poor people, in their anxiety to hear their advocate on every occasion, would throng to the lecture-room so as to crowd out the class to whom he wished to appeal on their behalf, and by whom they could be best helped. The very poor would come to hear him talk about their own destitute and suffering children—a subject with which they were only too familiar—to hear which discussed could not profit them or the cause in any way, while their presence in such great numbers at these free lectures excluded the very people to whom the appeal on their behalf was to be made. Besides, I can easily understand that a mind so sympathetic and delicate as that of John Servant would feel embarrassed in speaking freely of the miseries of the poor in the presence of the poor."

"That's morbid."

"I do not think so. And I think I can understand the reason why John Servant comes to London when London is crowded by the wealthy, the fashionable, and the idle, in the very commencement of the season, and has set his lecture in the afternoon during the hours when the upper classes are most at leisure and when all working-men and business men are engaged, and put his tickets up to a price that none but the well off can afford to pay—it is to collect together the rich and powerful, to whom he means to make his appeal on behalf of the helpless children. And now, aunty, I think it is time for you and me to go and get our bonnets on, for we live a long way from the Strand."

"Well, I'll go, Gloria. You have done very, very well for the last seven years. You have been the most prudent of young widows; so I do hope you are not going to spoil all by falling in love with this travelling philanthropist."

"Aunty!" said the lady, with a look of pain clouding the brightness of her brow. "Oh, aunty, if you knew what a cruel wound your words give me you would never speak them! Aunty, I love David Lindsay. I have always loved him, and him only. I shall always love him, and him only. I look forward to meeting him in Heaven, and to passing an eternity with him there. All this does not prevent my interest in this pure and noble philanthropist, but rather inspires it. Of this missionary personally we know nothing—not even whether he is old or young, married or single, handsome or homely. Indeed, however the only personal description I ever read of this great and good man represented him as a tall, pale, dark man, of middle age, in declining health, with impaired vision, and wearing spectacles. Not a very attractive description, aunty, dear."

"La, child, you can't depend on such descriptions! Only see how many different descriptions have been given of you, Countess Gloria; not two alike, and some quite opposite; and even that notice of you in the 'Court Journal,' describing you as tall, with flaxen hair, and black eyes, whereas you are of medium height, with golden-brown hair, and dark blue eyes."

"Well, aunty, my eyes are so dark that they might easily be taken for black, and my slender figure and trained dress give me an appearance of height which is not real."

"Yes, and about your dress—reporting it as a white point lace over white satin, when in fact it is English thread lace over white rep silk. Bah!"

"A difference, dear aunty, that no masculine mind except a shop-keeper's could ever have perceived. The description came near enough, aunty, as no doubt did the one relating to John Servant. However, we shall see for ourselves presently," said Countess Gloria, as she passed into her chamber.

"I hope to goodness he may prove to be hump-backed, bow-legged, squint-eyed, and pitted with the small-pox," said Miss De Crespiigny, as she entered her own bedroom. "It's all very well," she mumbled, as she rang the bell for her maid to come and get out her shawl and bonnet, "very well, indeed, for Gloria to talk about her fidelity to the memory of poor, brave David Lindsay; but I know the girl! Oughtn't I to know her? She is just the girl to throw away herself and fortune on any moonstruck fanatic who comes forward with an impossible scheme for improving society and benefiting mankind—like this strolling missionary. Oh! I hope he is an unmitigated fright to look upon!"

The entrance of Nerisse interrupted Miss De Crespiigny's mental soliloquy.

She was soon ready, wrapped in her long cachemere shawl, and her black velvet bonnet and plumes, and heavy black Chantilly lace veil, and gloves trimmed with sable furs.

She came out into the parlour, where she found Gloria in a silver grey moire antique dress, grey velvet cloak, and grey velvet bonnet, with one soft, light blue plume, and a muff and boa of silver fox fur.

"The carriage is waiting, aunty, and we have just time to get to Exeter Hall and secure good seats before it fills," said Gloria, as she led the way downstairs.

"I doubt the hall filling at the price," said the old lady, in a disparaging tone.

"Then you know nothing of the exceeding great ability of John Servant," replied Gloria, as they seated themselves in the carriage.

"If ever one woman was sick unto death of one name, I am of John Servant's," thought the victimised old lady as they rolled toward the Strand; but she did not speak her thought.

They drew up before Exeter Hall, and having ordered their cab to return for them at five o'clock, they dismissed it and entered the building.

A crowd of other persons, who had left hand-some carriages that were now driving off, entered with them.

Evidently the lecture was to be a financial success.

On reaching the hall, our party were shown to their seats in a very eligible situation for seeing and hearing—about three rows back from the middle of the platform.

The hall was already well filled, and Gloria had scarcely sat down, when, on looking around, she saw several of the parties to whom she had sent tickets seated in the same row with herself and her companion.

"I declare, aunty," she whispered, "the ticket-agent has issued all the twenty tickets to me for one row. I certainly did not count on that."

"You might have ascertained the fact before by looking at the numbers on the tickets."

"I never thought to do so."

Others now came in.

Every seat was filled.

On the right hand of Gloria sat the ladies of the minister's family.

On the left hand some ladies whom she had met at their house.

Silent, smiling greetings passed between them all as they settled in their seats.

The gas had not been lighted except upon the platform near the speaker's stand; but the window shutters had been left open, and the blinds drawn up, so that the subdued light of the February afternoon pleasantly filled the place.

The latest arrivals had scarcely settled into their seats, when the silence was broken by an enthusiastic burst of applause.

Gloria raised her eyes, and with a strong electric thrill recognised the presence of the lecturer.

(To be Continued.)

LORD FALMOUTH'S WINNINGS.—The following are the sums won this year by Lord Falmouth. The total of each horse is given, making his lordship's winnings for the year £34,433, exclusive of the Ascot Gold Vase. This is the greatest amount ever won in stakes in one year by any person on the turf, being £8,520 more than was won by M. Lefevre, in 1873. Silvio, £12,483; Lady Golightly, £4,945; Childeric, £3,540; Redwing, £5,135; Janette, £4,726; Skylark, £1,797 10s.; King Clovis, £800; Kitty Sprightly, £300; Hydromel, £440; Great Tom, £216 10s. Total £34,433.

BUISSON'S CURE FOR HYDROPHOBIA.

A MEDICAL correspondent of the "Lancet" forwards to the latter an extract taken from an old journal some years ago: "M. Buisson, of Paris, was inoculated by hydrophobia virus whilst attending a patient who was affected. He felt all the symptoms of the disease, constriction of the pharyngeal muscles, etc. He entered a Russian vapour bath, 170 deg. Fahr., resolving to terminate his life by suicide. To his astonishment the symptoms gradually vanished, and he in time completely recovered. Since then he has treated cases successfully. His mode of treatment is this:

"The person bitten should take a certain number of vapour baths, and every night should induce a violent perspiration by wrapping in flannels and lying under a feather bed, and by drinking freely of warm decoction of sarsaparilla. So convinced is he of this mode of treatment

proving successful that he will suffer himself to be inoculated with the virus. Dancing is also recommended to produce sweating. Animals which do not perspire—as dogs, wolves, and foxes—are most frequently affected with hydrophobia. Dancing was an old remedy for the cure of tarantula stings."

We insert the above for what it is worth. Probably if ever a cure is discovered for hydrophobia it will be as simple as the disease has been mysterious.

POOR LOO.

By the Author of "Dan's Treasure," "Clytie Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl," etc.

CHAPTER XLVI.

LADY TRAVERS STIRRES AT LAST.

And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade if unforgiven
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong. BYRON.

A WEEK passed, and Loo had become interested in some of the people who were staying in this quiet little sheltered nook on the Sussex coast, though she had as yet made no acquaintances among them.

There was the old gentleman whom Mabel said had stared at her so from the deck of the yacht, and sometimes the younger one was with him, whom Loo had herself admired, but, though they evidently took great interest in her, and their big dog, Nello, less ceremonious than his masters, came to her side, and boldly made friends with her, not even a bow had yet taken place between them.

A lady, too, attracted Loo's attention.

Young, she must be, from her carriage and the lithe suppleness of her figure; dark, too, if one might judge from the brown-black hair so tightly pinned up at the back of her head, but she invariably walked about wrapped up in a big, grey shawl, with a brown gauze veil tied closely over her brown hat and face, thus hiding complexion, expression, and well-nigh features, until it would have been quite impossible for even those who knew her well to recognise her.

About this girl, for such she was convinced she was, Loo wove as pretty a romance as it is possible to imagine, the only drawback being that there was not one atom of fact or reality in it; but romances are pleasant, even when we weave them ourselves, and the characters are all ideal, or creatures of our own imagination, and so Loo wove her gossamer fancies, drifting like a flower floating on a river till it reaches the rapids and currents, and is at last whirled off to the deep, remorseless sea.

Mabel and Loo had been for a walk on the sands.

Nello, the big black dog, which belonged to the two gentlemen whom they had first seen on board the yacht, had been showing his affection for Loo by bringing her an enormous hen coop, which he had rescued from the waves, and now oblivious of the quantity of water which was dripping from his coat and his trophy, he deliberately deposited it upon her lap.

A jump of surprise, laughter, expostulation, and the elder gentleman stepped forward and apologised, calling the dog off, and threatening him with his stick, until Loo interceded for the dumb creature, declaring that she did not mind it a bit.

Whereupon the gentleman and Mabel made some observations; the gentleman fancied he had met the ladies before; Mabel was not certain, but knew someone very much like him, Major General Speke.

Then the stranger claimed the general for his brother, produced his card, asked to be allowed to introduce his son, and, before they parted, requested and obtained permission to call upon them.

"What very nice people they are; and the young man is very agreeable, isn't he, auntie?" asked Loo, carelessly, as they walked back towards their temporary home.

"Yes"—reluctantly—"but let us make haste. I am hungry, and that dress of yours is completely spoilt by Master Nello's antics."

The girl looked ruefully at her dress.

Alas! it was too true.

Three large, dark stains of sea-water and mud, each of them as big as her hand, had left their imprint on the front of her costume, showing no sign of departure, now they had become dry.

Entering the house by turning the handle of the front door, as is usual in seaside houses, they were surprised to find in the passage and dining-room, instead of the usual preparations for luncheon, a constable, some excited servants, and to hear Lady Travers' voice in excited tones saying:

"Yes, I insist upon every box in the house being searched. I don't care who it belongs to. I will not be robbed by anyone!"

"What is the matter, aunt?" asked Mabel, stepping forward.

"I have lost a brooch—a diamond brooch. The one I showed you a week or two ago. A twisted brooch, with forget-me-nots in diamonds. The one I told you I intended to give to Constance Dorset. I will have it found, wherever it is! Constable, do your duty!"

"Very well, my lady. Will you give me your keys, if you please, miss?"

"My keys," repeated Mabel, in indignant amazement. "Was it for this?" she asked, with subdued passion, "that I have sheltered and provided for you for years, and that you begged me to stay in this house, even though I pay you for myself and this child? Pause a minute, aunt, for your own sake, not mine. Remember the brooch which Elaine gave to Loo; it was that which made me close my house at Notting Hill against you; this is another trick of the same kind; but if you persist in it I will not spare you so easily, and I will invoke the fullest punishment the law can inflict upon you."

As she spoke Lady Travers started, turned pale, and hesitated, but she had gone too far to retract, and she said, doggedly:

"I have said every box in the house shall be searched, and it shall."

"Then I shall be able to tell you where to find the brooch," said Mabel, calmly, turning to the constable. "Nine or ten years ago that woman," pointing to Lady Travers, "tried to fix the theft of a brooch upon that child," indicating Loo. "The brooch belonged to my sister, who had given it to my niece. Now Lady Travers thinks she has managed better. Loo, give the man your keys; the brooch will be found among your things."

"My keys!" repeated Loo, in horror. "I have not locked anything; all my boxes and drawers are open. I have not seen a brooch; what can they be thinking about?"

"You hear what my niece says. Here are my keys," said Mabel, handing them to the man; then she put her arm around Loo and walked with her into the drawing-room.

"My dear child," she said, gravely, "you must prepare yourself for a great trial. I have done very wrong in bringing you into the same house with this wicked old woman. She always hated you, now she is trying to work your ruin; can you be firm and brave, my child, and believe that if my life and fortune have to be expended for it I will prove your innocence, and punish her for this vile conspiracy."

"Innocence! Conspiracy! What does it all mean, auntie? I don't understand."

"It means, dear, that she has put some trinket of her own among your clothes, and will accuse you of having stolen it; don't you understand what that means?"

"What! She will put me to prison, call me a thief! Oh, auntie, I can't live under it, the shame, the disgrace. I shall kill myself! I shall die!"

And the girl was becoming frantic when Mabel, with her stern good sense, laid her hand upon her.

"Loo, be calm; I insist upon it," she said, firmly. "Don't disgrace yourself and me by such weakness. Is this the fortitude and courage I have heard you speak of? Does innocence cry out for escape like perjured guilt? Are you the only woman who has been falsely accused of a crime? Let me be proud of you as I have ever been, Loo, and bear this, as you would have me bear it, if, as I would to Heaven it were possible, I could suffer it instead of you."

"Dear Mabel, my more than mother, I am ashamed of myself. I will be firm and calm. Kiss me, and hold my hand; now I am better," and with a deep sigh that was almost a sob, the girl nerved herself up to the ordeal that was before her.

A few minutes later and a constable came into the room.

His manner was grave and respectful, he had no liking for the task he was about, and Lady Travers had not won his approval or confidence by the manner in which she had helped to toss Loo's delicate sherry and girlish treasures about until he had insisted that she would desist.

Nothing had been found however, search as they would, except a small box of Spa manufacture with views of the pretty Belgian watering-place upon the cover and sides; but this was locked, and the wicked old woman who to Loo's excited fancy seemed like a bad and malicious fairy, insisted that it should be broken open.

"I'll ask the young lady for the key first," was the surly rejoinder, and he came down to do so.

"The key was in it this morning," said Loo. "I put some violets in it that I had gathered before breakfast."

"Well it isn't here now, ma'am, and it's locked," sturdily.

"Then break it open," said Mabel, with impatience.

"Shall I, ma'am?" he questioned Loo.

"Yes," she replied, reluctantly; "but don't hurt the box if you can help it," and turning to Mabel she added: "Mr. Marker gave it to me."

"Never mind, he can give you plenty more, no one can be more indignant than he will be at your being placed in this position. 'Well, constable, have you found it?'"

"Yes, ma'am."

Loo shuddered, and the servants looked on in sympathy; all present felt certainly enough whose hand had placed it there.

"Of course, I knew you would," continued Mabel, bitterly. "The question now is, where is the key of that box? The theft of a key is as criminal in the eye of the law as the theft of a brooch, and Lady Travers, I saw that key in your hand an hour ago when I came in unexpectedly for a necktie; you were standing by that window with your back to me, and I saw you looking at it. I thought it was a trinket at first, and was surprised to find it was only a small key. Where is it?"

"It is false, I have not had it. I—I have seen no key to-day."

"You held it in your hand. Grace"—to the housemaid—"you saw it also?"

"Yes, my lady had a key in her hand," assented the girl.

"Of course I had the key of my desk," she asserted, boldly. "What should I know of the girl's key? you don't suppose I went to her boxes did you?"

"I know you did. You have done it before, but you were in my house then. Well, constable, what is the next thing?"

"Do you give this young lady in charge for stealing your brooch?" asked the man, sternly.

"I do," exclaimed Lady Travers, with defiant hate as she glared at the girl whom for so many years she had so impotently hated.

"Then you must come with me, please," said the man, looking at Loo and at Lady Travers, "and you, ma'am, and the servant had better come to speak about the key; if you're ready to swear to it," he went on, addressing Mabel. "I

don't want to make things more unpleasant than my duty compels me, so you can send for a fly if you like."

"Of course; thank you."

The order was given, and not long afterwards, the housemaid seated by the driver upon the box, the constable by the side of Lady Travers, and with Loo and Mabel facing them, the odd party drove off to the police-station.

As they drove along the dusty road a big dog barked, ran by the side of the carriage, and seemed as though it would speak to someone inside, and so persistent did it become, that two gentlemen to whom it belonged called it off and looked at the occupants of the fly, as they might not otherwise have done.

"How odd!" exclaimed the younger man. "There's Stubbs the constable with those ladies. What can be the cause? They are going to the police-station. Can they be in trouble? That girl's face looks as though she had been frightened out of her life. I wonder if we can help them?"

"At any rate, we'll follow and try," replied Captain Speke. "That old woman looks like an evil witch. Come along, Nello; good dog, he shall have an extra shilling for that."

With which they followed the carriage that was not yet out of sight.

CHAPTER XLVII.

A CONSPIRACY FROM THE PAST.

The day is done and the darkness falls from the wings of night as a tempest is whirled downward from a sign in his sign. Look on now.

The police-station at Little Bampton was not an imposing structure, being neither more or less than a small cottage in which the chief constable and his wife lived, one comparatively strong room being used as a temporary lock-up.

All cases of importance had to be taken to Borrowdale, four miles off, the seat of the Earls of Borrowdale, which was also a market town, and where a stipendiary magistrate three times a week was supposed to sit in the Town Hall, to dispose of trifling cases and administer justice.

A stern-looking man, with a merry twinkle in his eye that contradicted the hard lines of his mouth, Joshua Judge, the chief constable, believed, first of all, in the importance of his own office, next in the strict impartiality of the law.

Very patiently he listened to Lady Travers' statement that she had lost a brooch, had sent for a constable, had the boxes in her house searched, and now accused the girl who her niece had adopted, calling herself Lucile Travers, of having stolen it.

There was such evident spite in the old woman's manner of making the accusation, that Joshua Judge looked at her over his spectacles, and asked somewhat seriously:

"Are you serious in making this charge against the young lady?"

"Serious; of course I am. What do you mean? Am I to be robbed, and be patient?"

Stubbs, the constable, next gave his statement, truthfully, but evidently in Loo's favour.

Mabel's statement about the key, corroborated by Grace, the housemaid, followed; then the girl was asked what answer she had to make to the charge.

"I don't know anything about it," was the reply. "I never saw the brooch before. None of my drawers or boxes were locked, as I told that man," indicating Stubbs. "I had put some violets in that box this morning, and left the key in it. The key was a peculiar one, the part you hold in your hand being wide and ornamented."

"Then you deny the charge?"

"I do."

The charge was read over to Lady Travers, who, in a shaky hand, signed it.

Then the chief constable said:

"You will have to remain here to-night, young

lady. My wife will take care of you. In the morning I shall take you to Borrowdale, before the stipendiary. You will see that these ladies come, too," he added, to Stubbs.

The man touched his hat, while Lady Travers could scarcely conceal her fiendish triumph.

"Be firm, Loo," Mabel whispered. "I shall come to see you later in the day; meanwhile I have no time to lose. I must thwart and punish this wicked old woman!"

"I know you will do all that is possible," the girl said, while her lip quivered.

Then she was led from the room, Mabel following, when, after arranging with Mrs. Judge for her darling's comfort, she requested that Stubbs might be sent back to Lady Travers' house with her, to take away everything belonging to herself and Loo.

"She will be accusing me of theft next," she exclaimed, bitterly. "That woman who for fifteen years I kept from the workhouse."

"You're paying Lady Travers for your board, and you, ma'am," asked Mrs. Judge, who had been talking for a few minutes with her husband.

"Yes, I am."

"And money is no object to you?"

"None."

"Well, don't you think it's better to keep close to an enemy, and fix your eye on him, and see which way he means to strike? You'll never find out about that key, if you leave the house."

"True."

And Mabel clasped her forehead desperately, trying to see her way in the bewildering darkness that was before her.

"Of course it's not for me to say anything, ma'am, but money goes a good way in making servants sharp; and now I'll take care of the young lady as if she was my own daughter, particularly if she'll promise not to run away."

"I promise that for her—may I not, Loo?"

"Yes," was the reply.

A frantic embrace, then the two women who had never been separated for a day since that time when poor Freddy Dorset met his untimely fate, parted now, the one to throw herself despairingly upon the narrow bed, a prisoner, the other to go out into the world to fight the battle of right against might, of truth against malignant falsehood and treachery.

Outside the police-station door she came upon Captain Speke and his son.

"Forgive me, Miss Travers," said the brave old man, who had seventeen years ago stood on the deck of the "Lurline," ready to face death, and inspiring heroism in the hearts of crew and passengers, who otherwise would have rushed into all the excesses that drowning and despairing men are prone to.

These seventeen years had aged and bronzed him, but the same kind, yet imperious grey eye, that had given confidence to Lady Alice in her dying hour—that had subdued Lady Elizabeth when she would have questioned the claim of the waif he had rescued from the sea—now looked into Mabel Travers' face:

"You are in some trouble; can I help you? Though we are comparative strangers, you may command my services as an old friend."

Mabel looked at him.

She was a woman, and could fight like a lioness for her cubs, in the service of those she loved, but these kind words unnerved her, and she burst into tears.

The captain looked vexed and perplexed, as well he might do.

Miss Travers was not long in regaining her self-possession, however, and she said, gratefully:

"I am in great trouble. I want the advice of a man. But I cannot talk to you here."

"No; Reg, go and tell Mrs. Saunders we want her best sitting-room for half-an-hour, and tell her to keep the children out of the way."

"The wife of one of my old tars," he explained to the lady; "her husband is master of my son's yacht," and then he led the way to a pretty sheltered cottage a few yards up the road, into which his son had preceded him.

"I'm sure I'm only too honoured, Captain,"



[A VILE PLOT.]

said a buxom woman with a baby in her arms, as she led the way into her best sitting-room, with a courtesy to the lady, then, calling her children around her she went off into the garden in full sight of the house, but quite out of hearing, as a kind of proof that she was above the vulgar failing of curiosity.

A few words from Mabel put Captain Speke in possession of the facts of the case, and though his indignation against Lady Travers was not as loudly expressed as his son's it was quite as deep.

"But she must have some motive for her spite," he observed; "it seems so strange that she should accuse her own relative."

"My adopted niece is not her relative and no kin whatever to us, that is the cause of her spite," replied Mabel. "I took the child from a hospital and adopted her; my aunt—she is but my aunt by marriage—was living with me at the time, indeed she had no other home; she took an insane hatred to the child, and has never forgiven her or me because I refused to part with her."

Then followed a narrative of the brooch which Mrs. Dorset had given Loo, with the assurance that her sister would be quite ready to come forward and give her evidence on the girl's behalf.

"I suppose you knew the girl's parents," observed Captain Speke, carelessly.

"No, I did not; she was picked up in the street, having been run over; she spoke more Hindostanee than English, though we could make but little of it out; from that day to this no one has claimed her; but what of that? I have educated her as though she were my own child; all that I possess will one day be hers. I love her more than many mothers love their offspring. But we are losing time: I must telegraph for my solicitor and for the friend who first found Loo, if indeed he is in England; if not I must send to Spa. No time must be lost; every hour that my child remains a prisoner is to me intolerable agony."

"I am sure of it; but listen to me, Miss

Travers, I can be of some use," said the sailor, bluntly. "I am a magistrate of the county and a man of some position here; one day I hope to entertain you and your niece too at Speke Hall; to-morrow I will be on the bench at Borrowdale when your niece is brought up, and I will be surety for her re-appearance to any amount; in the meantime, if you will allow me, I will instruct my solicitor to undertake the defence; you can send for your own all the same, but he can scarcely be in time to be of use to-morrow, and the first step is to set the young lady at liberty; if she is out on bail we can fight the case more calmly, consequently with more chance of success, to say nothing of the young lady's comfort."

"Thank you, indeed you are a friend in need," replied Mabel, gratefully.

And then she asked his advice about the desirability of remaining any longer in Lady Travers' house.

"Stay by all means," was the emphatic rejoinder, "until your niece is free; bribe all the servants handsomely to watch the old woman; engage a detective or two to look after her when she leaves the house; the chances against finding the key in her possession are a million to one, still, sometimes the one wins. I would take another house at once, however; if your niece is free to-morrow she cannot return to that old harridan's. Reg will go with you to send your telegrams and arrange for a house while I pay a visit to my lawyer; I shall see you to-morrow at Borrowdale."

Then Captain Speke shook hands and went his way, leaving his son to accompany the lady.

Reginald Speke, however, was not as discreet as his father, and when an hour or two later Mabel was saying adieu to him and expressing her gratitude to his father for showing so much kindness to complete strangers, he said:

"Oh, you must not talk or think like that; my father has the odd idea that your niece was once entrusted to his care, and though he cannot blame himself for having lost the young lady in

question, he would feel it his duty to protect her wherever they should meet. I confess I ridiculed the idea until you told us to-day that she does not really belong to you—that you only adopted her; now I am beginning to think there may be some foundation for my father's fancies; it will be strange if it is so, won't it?"

"Very."

The young man saw he had made a mistake, but he knew not how to rectify it, and he went away promising to call and take her to Borrowdale the next morning, and wondering that the lady showed no more sign of pleasure at the possible prospect of discovering her adopted child's relatives.

And Mabel, as though she had been struck a blinding, dizzying blow, staggered up to her room, flung herself upon a couch, and burying her face in her hands, moaned:

"Only adopted! does not really belong to me. They are all bent upon robbing me, and I shall be left to live out my solitary life alone! To sink into a loveless old age without a single creature to care for me. Oh, Fred! had you but lived, had not that wicked mother of yours divided us, I had not been desolate as now."

That "wicked mother" heard the despairing cry and turned from the door with a white, scared face.

She had come to taunt her niece about Loo, but her dead son's name met her at the door, and she felt as though he were there in person to reproach and condemn her.

For the rest of that day Lady Travers kept her own room, and when the morning came, had she not felt she had gone too far to retract, and would expose herself to a charge of conspiracy, she would have drawn back from the wicked and perilous course which she had begun to tread.

Already the ground was slimy and slippery beneath her feet, and if there be truth and justice in the world surely she will yet find that "the way of transgressors is hard."

(To be Continued)



[AN UNGRACIOUS RECEPTION.]

WHO DID IT?

OR,

THE WARD'S SECRET.

CHAPTER XXII.

Once more ye laurels and once more
Ye myrtles born with ivy never sere;
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year,
For Lacydes is dead, dead ere his prime.

THE next day was one marked by the last sad rites that can be paid to the loved and lost.

The unfortunate Reginald Waldegrave was to be conveyed from the scene of his untimely fate to that last home of his ancestors, where he would sleep with them, though all unconscious of their proximity to his deeply mourned self.

And Mr. Leclerc was to follow him so far as the town where his remains would be transferred to the custody of the less interested but watchful railway officials.

Thus The Wilderness and its inmates were left unfettered by the presence of the master of the mansion.

And Viola knew and felt that it was an opportunity which appeared almost vouchsafed to her by Providence for her expedition to Leighton Court.

She had determined to make the attempt. Both Louise and Mike had declared that money was well nigh indispensable to the safety of her lover.

And from whom could she ask it but from the hands of his nearest relative—his guardian—his all but father. It was a formidable attempt.

She only knew the baronet by repute, and that repute was rather such as to daunt, not to encourage.

But what cared she in her engrossing alarm. She would have faced a cannon, and why not the stern presence of Neville's uncle. And quickly ordering a pony chaise to be made ready, a command that was obeyed with mingled astonishment and submission, she started on her momentous errand. She was an excellent "whip" as well as horsewoman.

Her colonial education had given her in perfection these accomplishments.

In this instance it was certainly a boon that such was her gift, for her thoughts were so engrossed that the guidance of her steed was scarcely more than mechanical till she arrived at the whilome residence of her imprisoned lover.

"Is Sir Aldebrande within? Will he see me?" she asked, falteringly of the porter.

"My master never sees strangers, and he is worse than usual just now," returned the man.

There was some hope in this. It was evidence of emotion at the least.

"Will you take him this note? He will say then whether he can see me," she pursued.

Perhaps the youth and beauty of the petitioner had some influence, for after some doubt the behest was complied with, and Viola was accommodated with a seat in a room that opened into the wide hall.

It seemed an age ere the man returned, and when he did appear, there seemed to be more astonishment than could well be accounted for in his face.

Viola did not know that the few words in her billet had worked such powerful effect on Sir Aldebrande, that even to the blunted senses of the stolid porter it was evident that his whole nerves were shaken by the very idea of the interview demanded.

"What is she like—who is with her?" came stammeringly from his tongue.

And the domestic, all unused to such familiarity of questioning from his stern master, had barely presence of mind to reply as he well dared to the queries so suddenly put.

"Please, Sir Aldebrande, I do not know the young lady, but she is very pretty and gentle spoken," he replied. "And I think she seemed in great trouble, sir."

The baronet gave a sarcastic smile.

"Trouble, yes, I daresay," he said, bitterly. "Well—well, it shall be so, then she shall see me, and know that others are in more hopeless sorrow than she is. Yes, let her come."

Viola knew not of this preamble to her visit. But she entered the room with a calm yet modest air that betokened little besides her earnest and heartfelt grief and resolution.

It was of Neville, not of herself that she thought, and she had no room for cowardice nor vanity.

"Your name is Devaux," said the baronet with a sternness that was perhaps more affected than real. "And, to save time, I may as well say at once that I suppose your errand is about Mr. Neville Grantley's trouble."

The girl did not flush even at these plain and scornfully spoken words.

It was no time for maiden shyness.

"Yes, Sir Aldebrande, it is of him, your nephew I came to speak, and to ask your help for his escape."

"Extremely like a maiden of any degree," he sneered, though his eyes were devouring her features with agitated eagerness. "First you drag your lover into fatal trouble by your forward levity, and then you force yourself in the same immodest way on his relative. Are you not ashamed of such unmaidenly ways, Miss Devaux?" he went on, as if venting his secret irritation on her devoted head.

"Are you justified in such reproaches when you are ignorant of the truth, Sir Aldebrande?" she said, firmly. "I am not here to vindicate myself, but to tell you what can be done to save your innocent nephew. Sir Aldebrande, if you knew all you would pity not blame me, but that signifies not. It is of Mr. Grantley I would speak. I have been urged by those who are able to save him, that they only want money."

And I have none—none to do any good. Will you help him—will you give him the only chance of escape?" she pleaded, her beautiful eyes gazing trustingly in his face.

"And enable you to marry him afterwards! That is your plan, I suppose?" he said.

"No—not so," she said. "I would never do him such hurt. It is for him I am anxious. If you knew with what cause you would not taunt me so unjustly."

He could hardly misinterpret the tone and earnest look, even had the words failed to convince.

"Do you love him?" he asked.

"I do, in all honour and delicacy," she said, firmly, "but that is not what I meant. Sir Aldebrande, I must not remain, or I shall be discovered, and all be ruined. Will you grant what I ask?"

"On one condition and only one," he said, "that you shall promise on your faith and honour never to marry him. He had better marry a dairymaid than a Devaux. And mark me, Viola Devaux, though he is dearer to me than you think or than he thinks, though his death would be mine, yet I had rather see him in his grave than as your husband."

Viola paled, perhaps under the strange vehemence of his manner, but she did not flinch before it.

"I do not understand you, Sir Aldebrande," she said, "but it matters not. I will give you my word never to think or listen to any idea of marriage with your nephew without your consent. Is that enough?"

"Just answer me, are you not the daughter of Roy Devaux?" he said, shuddering.

"No, his niece," she answered. "My father died far, far away, and Mr. Roy Devaux here in his native place, so I have heard; but why, what difference can that be where life is at stake?" she asked, eagerly.

"More than you know of, girl," he answered, sternly; "however, it shall be as you ask on the promise you have given. You shall have the money, but how is it to be accomplished? Are you not deceived in the possibility of the escape?"

"I do not think it. It is planned and promised by one who has secrecy in all he does, but who I believe is powerful," she said, earnestly. "In any case, it can but be tried. It is but the money you will lose if all fails."

"Money," he said, suddenly. "Were it all my fortune it should be given if I were sure of his innocence and of his safety. Heaven knows! Heaven knows!" he added, shuddering with a thrill that had more than once run through his frame. "Here, take this. Do not touch my hand. No, I cannot bear it."

And holding out to her some banknotes he took from a drawer near him, he waived her hurriedly and resolutely from the room.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The heath this night must be my bed,
The broken curtain for my head;
My lullaby the warder's tread;
To-morrow eve more stilly laid
My couch may be my bloody plaid.

"In a prison cell—accused of murder, in danger of death! And Viola!"

Neville Grantley might well murmur these broken sentences, as he sat dejected and alone in the county prison at Bodmin.

He had been removed thither on the day after the funeral of the victim of unbridled passions raging in his own breast and in those of others.

It was the last step in his downward course—the degradation was now complete.

Yet, no—not complete! There was one step more.

The trial, the condemnation, and the gallows. What chance was there for him?

None—in all human probability, none.

He could scarcely expect that any other evidence would be collected which might serve to establish his innocence.

And would Viola lament him as innocent?

She had given him full assurance of her

trust in him, but she might well feel shame at loving one who would incur the scorn and the hatred of the world.

She had not given him any word or sign before he had left The Wilderness, probability because it was impossible, and that it was no lack of will, but only the fear of injuring where she desired to save.

The door opened as he indulged these thoughts and the figure of a strangely dressed man, whose face was much concealed by a large flap hat, such as was often worn by the fishers and boatmen of the coast, glided in.

As the door was closed Neville could hear the words:

"Quick—only five minutes, remember."

And then the key turned again in its lock.

The man came forward and extended a small basket with bright looking pilchards in its recess.

"I've brought you some fresh fish, master. It will be better than prison fare. It's not been caught many hours. They're silly things, but not so foolish as some folks I wet of," he said, with a meaningful look at the prisoner.

Neville could scarcely believe his own ears and eyes.

He had a vague remembrance of the visitor and one that recalled the commencement of the most disastrous period of his life.

Till that memorable night he had known no terror—no danger. And this man was associated with that night.

He could scarcely recall clearly the features that he had only seen indistinctly in that gloomy cave.

But the voice—that he did perfectly recall. It was too entirely fixed on his senses to be forgotten.

"You remember me," whispered the man, stooping low. "I see it—don't speak. And," he added in a louder tone, "I have brought you some fish as a remembrance, and if you'll take it, just say so. I've asked the gaoler if he'll cook it for you, and I don't think he'll make any objection."

Neville could perceive that there was some latent meaning in the man's words.

He accepted the basket which was extended to him, and examined the fish.

"Ah," said the man, "you'll find I'm no cheat to put best at top. All's good, and if you're content I'll just leave them with you, and hope you'll make a meal of them to-night. The time's up," he went on. "I must give you good-day."

As he spoke the grating of the key was heard and the gaoler appeared.

"Come away, old fisher—quick; you've had too long already," he said, gruffly. "Going to leave your basket, are ye, that's very generous," he added, with a laugh.

"Maybe it's to be called for," returned the man, "when the fish is cooked. Master, I now give you good day, young sir, and I'm sorry for a young gentleman in such a plight."

He retired as he spoke, and Neville rapidly emptied the basket.

It was full of the bright small fish, but in a deep recess skillfully made in the bottom of the basket he detected a small parcel which he at once seized and secreted till after the gaoler's next visit, that he knew would not be very long deferred.

It was with difficulty that he could thus delay his examination, but the minutes went slowly on, and he occupied that time in feeling what seemed to be a somewhat thick and hard substance, wrapped in thick paper.

The gaoler at last brought the dinner, that was not altogether so unsavoury as might have been expected for prison fare.

The indulgence perhaps might be due to that honoured name in the county with which he was connected, and which could scarcely allow complete indifference to the prisoner so highly connected and so terribly afflicted.

And so soon as the meal was concluded and the door again closed on him Neville seized the precious packet and began to examine the contents.

There was a closely woven coil of rope, a

gimlet and a letter, which was wrapped in the smallest possible compass.

It had a few delicately traced lines:

"NEVILLE—If you would save me a life-long remorse you will do all I would have you. Trust the bearer, obey him, and read this by light of fire or candle. It will be dark, maybe, in a prison. Your own Viola."

He kissed the paper again and again. Yet what did it mean? Certainly not that he was to accept the fish which had been brought for his eating.

He perused it again. What did that last behest convey. An idea flashed upon him.

"Fire and candle?"

Did they not imply invisible ink, that could be perused only when exposed to such agencies.

He placed it again in concealment, and waited for the advent of the light that was allowed him for a brief space in the early hours of the evening.

He felt the precious document from time to time, as a spell to pass away more rapidly the hours which might elapse ere he completed the perusal.

He could guess pretty well that it was some attempt for his escape.

Should he comply?

Viola was no weak, unreasoning girl to make random assertions in language that was only intended to carry her point.

"Not so. She is honourable, self-controlled, noble," he muttered, as he paced the small room. "It is not likely that she has done this. Yet how could she secure that dark and probably unfavourable man's co-operation? How did she ever know of his existence?"

Then came the remembrance of Martin Trevor, the almost equally rough, unscrupulous boatman who had spoken so much and so significantly of Roy Devaux, who had expressed so strong suspicions of his death, and marked the resemblance of Viola to that unfortunate victim.

All this floated quickly through Neville's mind, and the minutes passed more rapidly from the occupation of his thoughts, till the lamp heralded the gaoler's approach at his accustomed hour ere retiring to rest.

Tremblingly did he make the essay by the heat of the flame that was too faint to work any rapid spell, and for a brief time he began to think that it must be a delusion, and that no such directions were intended.

But just as he arrived at this conclusion a transparent appearance showed itself on the blank sheet.

Then words were undoubtedly formed, and at length he could make out thus much:

"Be ready—in dead of night—use the means furnished, and a friend will be at hand to—"

Neville was about to decypher yet more, but the paper caught fire from the flame by which it was held, and in a few moments the precious lines were beyond chance of recovery.

It might not be of moment, it might be that no more was to be discovered, but Neville experienced an ominous blank at the sudden disappearance of his treasure.

Did it portend evil or disappointment?

He was in a state of mind to seize on any such discouraging fears, and he gazed on the charred fragments which were flying about the lamp, as if they were the smoke of unfulfilled hopes vanishing into air.

But the regrets were only weakening and vain, and though he could not but fear that the whole scheme might fail from insufficient directions, he yet resolved to do his part, and to repay his fair Viola for the noble efforts she was making on his behalf.

The dead of the night. What night?

He must act on the supposition that it was the one at hand, and he made his observation accordingly.

The apartment—for it was scarcely so narrow nor so secure as a cell—was low, and the window one of the casements that bespoke its age.

The gimlet was doubtless intended to open some of the fastenings and take the nails from the wooden bars of the window, and the rope,

without any doubt, would be the sole means of dropping down from the window into what he scarcely knew what depth.

He had been brought there in such obscurity that he was not acquainted with the exact position of the prison nor his apartment.

But he could only imagine that there would be preparations outside for his reception. And again, he told himself, what would it signify if he lost his life, or injured his limbs.

Better than that a felon's death, amid the scorn of a gaping crowd, and the almost equally insulting pity of those who forgave the crime for the sake of his youth and position in the county.

"Good-night, Mr. Grantley. Don't say that you had fresh pilchards to-night," said the gaoler. "It's not prison fare, you see, sir."

"Rely on it, my good friend, I will not get you into any trouble," said Neville, "from your kindness to me."

"I believe you, sir, or I'd not have dared to show it," observed the man once again. "I've not been so very long in this work, and I'm well nigh tired of it, if I could get anything else, but it's late, and I must do my duty, Mr. Grantley, while I am here."

He went to the casement, examined carefully its fastenings—looked round the room—placed the pallet couch in a somewhat more available place than it occupied during the day, and then taking his leave for the night, he locked and double-locked the door, with an almost ostentatious decision.

All gradually subsided into silence. It was to be the "dead of the night" ere the attempt was to be made.

But still he could use the interval, and the faint assistance of the moonlight, in loosening the fastenings, and preparing them to be drawn out at the appointed moment.

Still and death-like was the utter hush of the old town.

Now and then he could hear a sound, that died away directly in the distance, and at rare intervals the step of the warder round the prison passages.

It was after the second of these nocturnal visitations that he resolved to attempt the hazardous escape.

He heard, or fancied he heard, a low and soft rustling beneath.

He was convinced that once, at any rate, he could catch the sound of a horse's neigh.

But it might all be disconnected with himself, and it was with a desponding desperation that he began his work. Softly at first!

Slowly, to avoid the grating noise, and then with a quicker and more decided hand, he drew forth the half-rusted nails, and drew the fastenings from their insecure hinges.

In truth Bodmin gaol was far more adapted for petty felons than an accused murderer, and the good Cornish people might well be pardoned for a neglect which bespoke well for the freedom from any aggravated crimes in their midst.

In a tolerably short space of time, considering his imperfect tools, the work was so far advanced that it was only the next visit of the warder which could delay its final execution.

Neville drew cautiously back, and listened till he had passed, and deposited himself on the couch lest the warder should see fit to open the door.

It was well he did so.

A light flashed for a moment in his cell, and his closed eyes could scarcely refrain from betraying his consciousness of its presence.

Then it faded.

A noiseless retreat, an unusually quiet turn of the key, and it was over, and he was once more alone.

"Now for it!" he murmured. "Neville Grantley, think of Viola, and be brave and succeed, or die with courage!"

He made one strong effort to force open the casement.

It gave way at last so suddenly that he well nigh fell back from the shock.

Then came the more difficult task of passing through and letting himself down—he knew not where.

He was young and agile, but still the opening was so small and the darkness so thick, that it was a task at once of danger and difficulty.

His body was partly through—he caught at the rope to assist him in his descent, and support him when he had to trust to the unknown vacancy beyond.

He twisted and wriggled like a snake, till he was fully through the opening.

He hung in the cold, night air, by the aid of the friendly rope.

A few more moments, and it gave way, and he was thrown headlong to the turfed fosse beneath.

There was no noise, save a muffled, gurgling sound, for the water, though not deep, was sufficient to stifle any sound that would have arisen from the concussion.

And, it might be, perhaps, from that circumstance that no alarm was created in the building itself.

In its immediate neighbourhood there was a suppressed exclamation, very like an oath, but it was rather breathed than spoken.

And ere it could be repeated, a strong hand was placed on the utterer's mouth, and his figure impelled forward from the spot in breathless silence.

"Quick! quick!—at any risk!" was hissed close in his companion's ears by him who had first spoken.

Then the two men stooped and raised the prostrate form between them, as if it had been a child.

They hurried off as direct and fearless as if the road had been familiar to them, till they reached the middle of the town, where a cart and horse stood, tied to one of the lamp-posts that was only occasionally used in the quaint old town.

It was nearly full of the large fish paniers that are commonly used in the county for the conveyance of fish from the coast to the inland towns.

The body, for it might indeed be but little more than a senseless corpse, was buried beneath these large paniers, so as completely to conceal its presence.

Then it was smothered by the bright glassy fish that had been conveyed to the market, and the horse impelled rather by gesture and motion than any perceptible coercion, to a brisk pace homewards.

But the path was not to be so smooth as it at first promised.

A watchful keeper of a turnpike gate hailed the vehicle as it rolled through.

"Hallo, comrade, what now? Had such ill luck that you're going back fish and all?" he exclaimed, "Better leave us some as toll—instead of money."

"Not a bit, Master Brande," returned the carman. "We've paid already, and you can't take twice. But I don't mind half-a-dozen as a compliment," he added, putting his hand on the overflowing baskets within.

"I'll choose for myself," said the tollkeeper; "since you're so generous, master fisher."

"No—no, two to that bargain," replied the carman. "I'll be asked, but not robbed. So you'll e'en go bare this time."

And he applied the whip pretty smartly to the animal, who reared and kicked so ungovernably that the tollkeeper was fain to relinquish his hold, though not without a significant growl that promised vengeance hereafter.

Then for some mile or more the rapid pace continued, to which the impetus had been just given.

And ere the day dawn broke to throw some light on the scene they were rapidly making way towards the coast.

"Is he alive? Best throw him overboard if he ain't," was the suggestion of one of the confederates.

"It's a fool's errand, and no mistake," returned the second. "And he's a duffer to come to such a pass."

"Don't be too hard on him, Martin. It's not everyone who's born to the coasting line of business," observed the other, significantly. "And anyhow, I'm pledged true and deep to

hold him safe from harm. Art ready to go with us, Fred?"

"I'm ready to back you up, Mike, but I've no calling for a corpse at sea," returned the man. "It's not company."

"Foolery," said Mike, roughly. "I fear nor man nor devil—on sea or land. Nor a hair of this unlucky young fellow's head shall be plucked without his knowing it. There are those that both deserve and will pay for the care."

Martin did not reply.

Rough and eccentric, he was not altogether such as Mike carne.

He was perhaps inferior in education and in wits.

Most assuredly he was scarcely so indomitable in will, nor so fiercely unscrupulous in deeds as the inmate of the cottage—the father of the rescued Nellie.

He yielded, as many times before, to the stronger and contemptuous tone of his companion, so far as his powers permitted, but there was unquestionably a real repugnance to the task proposed.

"We're running our necks into the noose," he remonstrated, "you forget that, Mike. It's a hanging business, not a mere smuggling run."

"We've got them round us already, Martin. It's too late to draw back. A bold step and it may give us all we want."

"Or be ruined. Remember Roy Davaux," returned the other. "There's an ill fate round the name."

"It's an angel that bears it, and she'll break the charm," said Mike, as the cart drew towards the tossing billows. "Will you venture, or be a dastardly coward?"

Martin paused.

"There's not a man living who'd say them words except yourself, Mike," was the answer. "Let's look at the white faced idiot, for idiot he was to get in such a confounded scrape."

The men gave a cautious look around. Mike busied himself in freeing the inmate of the strange vehicle from the coverings and gazed on his features.

They were pale as death. No colouring in mouth and eyes.

No movement in the tell-tale eyelids that are so seldom obedient to the will where any need for concealment exists.

"He's dead, ten times over—as dead as the man he murdered," observed Martin.

"Then it's no matter if he gets drowned, and all will be smashed up," remarked the other. "It will satisfy Miss Viola, and keep me out of trouble. Come along, Martin, give a hand."

The rough comrade obeyed.

The body was taken from the mass in which it had been concealed, and carried to a secluded spot where a boat was riding at anchor.

"Pull it away," was the order.

Then the anchor was loosened, the man who had superintended the removal waded into the water, and drew it to land, and then the senseless burden was placed in its bottom and once more carefully covered with the tarpaulin which the little skiff contained.

"Safe as a herring now," observed Mike. "Don't be an idiot, man, but come off before the morning dawn breaks, and folks are astir."

A slight hesitation and then it was concluded. Martin gave a sharp glance round.

Then he pushed the skiff among the waves that were rolling and dashing as only the Atlantic breakers can.

The slight barque rose and plunged down again at each movement of the stormy ocean, as if each moment must be its last of life and safety. But Neville Grantley heeded not the gathering squall; he was unconscious of the roll or of the steady calm; he had escaped the felon's dock—the hangman's fingers—but had exchanged such dangers for the equally ruthless tempest and devouring ocean.

(To be Continued.)

It is stated that the Mint is in treaty for a site of two acres on the Embankment near Blackfriars Bridge, where the gas-works stood.

MOON MADNESS.

ABSURD as the idea seems, there are many people who believe that exposure to the moon's rays while sleeping will cause madness. It is true that some deleterious influence is experienced by those who rashly clumber in full moonshine. A gentleman living in India undertakes to explain this fact by stating that these bad effects are occasioned by chill. "This chill is more likely to occur when the sky is perfectly clear. I have often slept in the open air in India on a clear summer night, when there was no moon; and although the first part of the night may have been hot, yet towards two or three o'clock in the morning the chill has been so great that I have often been awakened by an ache in my forehead, which I as often counteracted by wrapping a handkerchief round my head, and drawing the blanket over my face. As the chill is likely to be greatest on a very clear night, when there is a bright moonshine, it is very possible that neuralgia, paralysis, or other similar injury, caused by sleeping in the open air, has been attributed to the moon, when the proximate cause may really have been the chill, and the moon only a remote cause acting by dissipating the clouds and haze (if it do so), and leaving a perfectly clear sky for the uninterrupted play of radiation into space."

CONVICTED.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ROWLAND INGESTRE, Marquis of Mountheron, in place of his unfortunate kinsman who had been condemned to death for the murder of the preceding marquis, bore no outward resemblance to the men of the Mountheron race.

He had not the tawny hair and blue eyes of the Mountherons; he had not the stalwart frame, the grandeur of height and physical development, or the kingly air that had for centuries distinguished them.

Alex felt an instinctive sense of surprise because the marquis was so unlike her father. And then succeeded a deep and powerful conviction that this man, against whom before seeing him she had conceived a prejudice, was incapable of crime—that he was innocent of her uncle's murder.

The marquis was middle-aged, but looked younger.

He was slender, pale, and melancholy, with a long, thin, sallow face, the chief characteristic of which was its wonderful gentleness of expression.

His eyes, small and black, were soft and sad in their gaze.

Softness and gentleness were his prominent qualities; his movements were almost silent; his voice was low and soft; his manners the perfection of mildness and good breeding.

He appeared delicate in health, yet not sickly.

He was the ideal of a gentle, pale, scholarly clergyman.

Yet it must not be inferred, from his softness and mildness, that he was characterless and insipid.

To the contrary, there was a subtle charm of fascination in his manners that constituted him a favourite in society, and had won for him unsought more than one proud maidenly heart.

He was versed in all the small, sweet courtesies of life; could charm alike the statesman, the woman of the world, or the fresh young schoolgirl.

He had no love for politics, but no man better enjoyed or appreciated the pleasures of society or the luxuries of wealth.

Before his accession to the Mountheron title and estates he had been the chief representative of the cadet branch of the family, with three lives between him and the peerage, and conse-

quently without prospect of inheriting the Mountheron grandeurs.

He had possessed expensive and luxurious tastes, without the means to gratify them. He had been in the habit of spending months of every year at Mount Heron Castle, having been a favourite with the cynical and crippled marquis, whose terrible fate had afterwards brought him such great good fortune.

His unfortunate predecessor had repeatedly paid his debts and given him large sums of money, but Ingestre's demands increasing with their gratification, the late marquis had given him more and more reluctantly, and, but for the singular fatality that had swept away three strong lives from his path, the present marquis would have been to-day one of the innumerable host of broken-down gentlemen, with tastes beyond their power to gratify, poor yet extravagant, incapable of work, fond of luxury, dragging out an existence little less than intolerable.

Lord Mountheron had never married. In the days when he had been only Rowland Ingestre, poor but extravagant, without the most remote prospect of inheriting the Mountheron title and estates, he had not ventured to dream of marriage.

Since his accession to wealth and dignities, he had been able to choose a wife from the ranks of the highest nobility, but he had for years given himself up to the full enjoyment of his freedom.

Some years since, however, he had avowed himself the suitor of the Lady Vivian Clyffe, the divorced wife of his unfortunate kinsman, and they were now popularly supposed to be betrothed.

The marquis could not fail to notice the strange intent look in the lovely sapphire eyes fixed so steadily upon him, with a singular eagerness in their liquid depths.

He started under that glance, even while he acknowledged his presentation to Alex with the gentle courtesy that always distinguished him.

The radiant loveliness of the innocent mignonette face impressed him, but the sapphire hue of the large eyes and the tawny hue of her massive ripples of hair seemed to him not unfamiliar.

She reminded him of someone he had known, but the remainder was too vague and indistinct for his full enlightenment, serving only to give him a slight yet decided uneasiness.

Alex had barely time to return his pleasant greeting, and to study his mild and melancholy features, when an elderly lady in black satin gown and white lace cap entered the drawing-room.

She was Lady Markham, the widow of a sporting baronet, who had run through his estates and left her impoverished.

For some years she had occupied the position of chaperone to Lady Vivian Clyffe, who was still too youthful in appearance, and by far too beautiful, to dispense with the services of a chaperone.

Lady Markham was tall and spare in figure, with a severity of expression that made her seem the very incarnation of respectability.

Her grey hair was arranged in bunches of short curls on either side of her thin face. Her eyes, concealed by her gold-bowed spectacles, were small, keen, and full of suspicion.

She was devoted to the Lady Vivian, who treated her with scrupulous respect and courtesy as an honoured guest, and she was jealous of everyone who won the favour of her employer, with the single exception of Lord Mountheron. Him she liked.

She believed that the Lady Vivian would certainly accept one of her numerous suitors sooner or later, and she believed that the Marquis of Mountheron, who had always treated her with marked consideration, would regard her interest more than anyone else would be likely to do.

In brief, she looked forward to spending her old age in honoured retirement at Mount Heron Castle, and was a warm ally of the marquis in his suit with the Lady Vivian.

But of all other persons who approached her

ladyship she was envious and bitterly jealous, fearing that they might be preferred to her, or that their influence might be employed in a manner inimical to her interests.

Lady Vivian introduced Alex to her duenna, who surveyed the young girl coldly and sharply while greeting her with scrupulous politeness. Lady Markham had never liked the former companion of the Lady Vivian, who had been drawn into closer relations with their common employer than she had ever enjoyed, and she conceived an instantaneous dislike to Alex, whose wonderful beauty, patrician air, and exquisite breeding were marked by her as so many personal affronts.

This girl could not fail to attract attention and admiration.

She could not fail to win her way into Lady Vivian's heart.

Lady Markham felt that Alex's advent was a source of danger to her.

She was suspicious of her, and resolved, even in the moment of their meeting, to watch her closely.

"Her stay with Lady Vivian shall be a short one," thought the baronet's widow, grimly. "She a 'companion'! She looks more like the heiress of some noble house! I don't believe in her. If I have any influence with Lady Vivian, this girl will be sent adrift in a month!"

Her dislike was not apparent in her softly-modulated tones, however, nor in the look of seeming kindly interest she bestowed upon Alex.

She engaged the girl in conversation, while Lord Mountheron and the Lady Vivian moved towards the fire-lit hearth.

"Your new companion is a wonderful improvement upon her predecessor, Lady Vivian," said the marquis, in low tones, regarding the young girl with a singular keenness in his soft, mild eyes, and speaking with the familiarity of an old friend. "How marvellously beautiful she is! Her face reminds me of a picture by Greuze. Her manner would become a young duchess. She was not here yesterday. Where did you find her?"

"I have been remarkably fortunate in securing her," said Lady Vivian, with a look of dawning tenderness at her young companion. "She is a stranger in England, and happened to be stopping at the Mount Heron Arms when she heard that my late companion's place was vacant, and applied for the situation. She came to me to-day. I think I never saw a lovelier face, nor one more innocent."

"Yet I hope you did not engage her solely on the strength of her beauty," said the marquis, smiling.

"She was well recommended," replied Lady Vivian. "And if she were not her face is a thoroughly good recommendation. I have taken a great fancy to her, and I am not in the habit of falling in love at first sight. I foresee that she will be a source of pleasure, and even happiness, to me. Lady Markham is too old to be a companion to me; she is only a chaperone. I like young girls; I think Miss Strangely will be like a younger sister to me, and will fill a void in my life."

"Can a hired companion be so much to you?" asked the marquis. "What void can there be in your life, Vivian—you who are the belle of the day, the leader of fashion, the most admired and courted lady in all England?"

A look of dreariness and desolation came into the dusk eyes of the Lady Vivian, a look such as her friends and admirers had never before seen there.

"Woman of the world as I am, Lord Mountheron," she said, in a tone indicative of intense suppressed feeling, "I have my lonely hours when even admiration and popularity fail to satisfy me," and her lips curled in bitter irony. "Have you ever thought that I am almost entirely alone in the world? My parents are dead. My brother is absorbed in politics, and his own immediate family. I live by myself and for myself. No one in all England can be found more really isolated and set apart from their kind than I. I have tried to attach myself to Lady

Markham—to my late companion. I need human ties—affection, sympathy. Does this sound strangely from my lips? You see now why I look upon this young girl with such keen and unusual interest. I hope that she will be more to me than a mere 'hired companion.'"

Lord Mountheron flushed slightly, and seemed about to utter some gallant response. He checked himself, however, if such had been his intention, and said, quietly:

"Adventuresses are often beautiful and innocent in seeming. It is plain that Miss Strange is a lady by birth as well as by breeding. Do you know her history?" and there was some curiosity hidden under his apparently careless manner.

"I have not had time to win her entire confidence. I only know that she is the daughter of an impoverished English gentleman, resident abroad, and that she has never been away from home before. She came to England in search of suitable employment, and Providence brought her to me."

The marquise was not quite satisfied, but that was neither the time nor place to express his dissatisfaction. He continued to regret Alex with a dreamy sort of gaze, and said softly:

"I am very singularly interested in her. Do you know, Vivian, I have an odd impression that I have seen her somewhere before?"

Lady Vivian started and changed colour.

"Impossible!" she exclaimed. "She is a stranger in England!"

"Then she reminds me of someone I have seen. Her looks are not perfectly unfamiliar to me."

"I had the same impression," said Lady Vivian. "She reminds me of someone I have seen. But here come my guests."

A little group of ladies and gentlemen entering at this juncture put a stop to any further private conversation between Lord Mountheron and his hostess.

Alex had wandered to a window with Lady Markham, who deserted her at the entrance of the new arrivals.

The young girl sat down in the broad, cushioned window-seat, half hidden by the draperies of satin and lace, and looked out upon the scene of beauty and splendour with eyes that betrayed nothing of her secret anxiety and expectation.

Her heart was beating wildly.

Joy and terror struggled for the mastery in her breast. Her lover was likely to enter at any moment.

What would he say to her presence at Clyffe House? Would he draw upon her suspicion and distrust?

Yet she could not avoid meeting him, even had she so wished. She trembled, and a sense of suffocation came upon her.

She heard, as in a dream, the sound of wheels upon the avenue outside, then the noise of arrivals, and a minute or two later two or three gentlemen, guests at Mount Heron Castle, entered the apartment.

Prominent among them was the young Earl of Kingscourt.

Alex thrilled with delight at the sight of his kingly figure towering above the Honourable Bertie Knollys and Colonel Wilbraham.

His pale, olive face, grand and noble, graver than she had known it, seemed to stand out from its surroundings as a star shines through the gloom.

The girl caught her breath sharply. It seemed to her that she should faint.

There was a brief interval, during which the young earl greeted his beautiful hostess and his fellow-guests, and then the Lady Vivian, leaning lightly upon his arm, brought him directly towards Alex's retreat.

"I have a young companion to whom I desire to present you," said her ladyship. "She is a stranger here, and I count upon your kindness, Lord Kingscourt, in helping to dissipate her sense of loneliness."

The words, uttered in a low tone, penetrated to Alex's hearing. By a strong, resolute effort she regained her calmness.

Lady Vivian drew aside the window-draperies and the lovers were face to face.

"Miss Strange," said Lady Vivian, "permit me to present to you Lord Kingscourt."

The girl lifted a pair of pleading eyes to the face of her lover.

She was pale, even to her lips, but every clear-cut feature of her exquisite face was full of anxiety and beseeching.

The young earl started in his amazement at meeting her so strangely and unexpectedly, but he uttered no exclamation, nor did he avow any previous acquaintance with her.

He comprehended her desire that he should be reticent concerning their previous acquaintance, and bowed to her gravely and with a self-possession that aided to restore her own.

There was no scene: the girl's emotion had been so brief that Lady Vivian had not noticed it.

No eyes save that of Lord Kingscourt had marked Alex's agitation and look of pleading—no eyes save those of Lady Markham!

"There's some mystery there," thought the baronet's widow. "The earl and Miss Strange have met before. And it's plain that she's afraid that he will tell who she is. I was right in distrusting the girl. Now that I have discovered that there is a mystery about this girl I will devote all my energies to ferret it out. Lady Vivian is altogether too impulsive. She has taken a viper into her house, and I shall expose that viper and drive it out."

She set her thin lips together in an expression of determination that boded ill for Alex.

Lord Kingscourt and Alex exchanged commonplace observations, and the dinner was announced.

Lady Vivian asked the young earl to take Miss Strange in to dinner; the remaining guests were paired, and Lord Mountheron took in his hostess.

Lord Kingscourt sat beside Alex and talked with her upon trivial subjects, and Alex replied to him with some attempt at gaiety.

He made no allusion to the past, conducting himself in all respects as a stranger; but Alex noticed that his eyes were grave, and that his mouth wore an expression of anxious perplexity at times.

The dinner passed slowly to them both, and Alex experienced a sense of relief when at last Lady Vivian gave the signal and the ladies retired to the drawing-room.

Alex made her way to the window-seat, looking out upon the bright scene from the retirement of the massive draperies.

Lord Kingscourt sauntered carelessly toward her.

"Will you not come out for a little stroll in the moonlight, Miss Strange?" he asked, courteously. "The sea is magnificent to-night."

Alex hesitated, paling and flushing.

"Others have gone out for a view of the sea from the cliff," said the young earl. "Come."

There was a little gentle authority in his tones that compelled Alex's obedience.

She took his arm and they passed out into the hall, unobserved save by Lady Markham, who, now that she had conceived evil suspicions against Alex, did not permit herself to lose sight of her movements.

The young pair paused in the hall, while the earl despatched a servant in quest of a wrap for Miss Strange.

The servant returned with a fleecy white shawl, one of Mademoiselle Gauthier's purchases for her former pupil, and Alex wrapped herself in it and flung one end over her head, in picturesque fashion.

Then they descended the broad steps and walked slowly through the moonlight toward the restless, shining sea.

Neither spoke until they had gained a lonely spot upon the brow of the cliff.

The mansion, with lights streaming from every window, was at some distance behind them.

Others were strolling about in the vicinity, but no one was within earshot.

They paused upon the edge of the cliff and

there was a little silence between them. The young earl waited for Alex to speak, but she could not.

He loosened her arm from his, and retreated one or two steps, regarding her gravely, but not sternly, and with an infinite love and tenderness that went to her soul.

"What does all this mean, Alex?" he asked gently.

"It means," said the girl, in a faltering voice, "that I am the hired companion of the Lady Vivian Clyffe!"

"Where is your father, Alex? He is not—dead?"

"No, Heaven forbid. He is in Greece!"

"What brought you to England? He did not come with you?"

"No, I came alone," replied the girl, steadily. "At least, I came on to Paris alone. I had an escort from Paris to Mount Heron village."

The earl looked pained and troubled.

"I cannot understand your presence here, Alex," he exclaimed. "I cannot understand how your father suffered you to leave home, and alone. He idolised you; he watched over you more like a mother than a father; he lived but in you. How then could he let you, so tenderly nurtured and cherished, go forth to a strange country, alone, to earn your bread? I was never so amazed in my life as when I met you this evening in Lady Vivian's drawing-room. I can scarcely believe now that it is really you. Explain this mystery, Alex!"

Again the gentle tone of authority in his voice compelled Alex's obedience.

"The explanation is simple," she answered. "After your departure Spiridon the bandit returned to his old haunts. I was walking in our garden when he sprang over the wall and began to tell me that he loved me. He begged me to become his wife, the queen of his band of brigands. I refused, and he undertook to carry me off by force."

"The dastard!"

"Papa rushed out and saved me," continued Alex. "The servants appeared; the bandits were driven off. But our home had become unsafe for me, and papa decided to take me to Athens. The next day we loaded our yacht with our valuables, and when evening came on we set out for the bay."

"We were not half way to the shore when we heard our enemies pass us on their way to the villa. We were silent until they had passed by, and then hurried on to the boat."

"We had scarcely embarked when we saw our house in flames. We sailed to the Piræus, and went to Athens."

"Our home was destroyed, but we afterwards learned that Spiridon had been taken captive by the soldiers you had procured to be sent—taken captive while he lingered by the smoking ruins."

"Spiridon had friends and allies enough to render it unsafe for me to return to our desolated homestead, and I begged papa to let me come to England."

"You will certainly be safe here. But why did not Mr. Strange come with you?"

"He could not. There was the ruined property to look after, the groves and vineyards. The estate must be restored, or it must be sold. Papa could not come to England, but he consented to let me come. I did not dream of meeting you here," and Alex's cheeks flushed hotly. "I went to my old governess in Paris, and she procured me the escort of a respectable serving-woman who had been sent in charge of a young girl to a Paris pensionnat. The serving-woman brought me to Mount Heron village. I heard at the Mount Heron Arms that the companion of the Lady Vivian Clyffe had been taken ill, and had been obliged to go home to her friends. I applied for the situation, and the Lady Vivian engaged me. I arrived at the Clyffe House only this afternoon."

She had not looked up while rehearsing her story. Now she raised her eyes, which glowed like two burning stars, and Lord Kingscourt saw through their anxious depths her troubled soul.

"I cannot tell you what it is. Vane, it would be wiser for you to marry someone else. The obstacle I speak of may never be removed."

"You should know me better than to speak to me of marriage with another," interposed Lord Kingscourt. "I love you, Alex. I will marry you or no one!"

The girl's face brightened and gladdened into a glorious radiance.

"Then you must wait for me, Vane!" she said. "If he answers my prayers, all may yet be well with us. But you must keep my secret. You must never speak of my father to anyone, or allude to our former acquaintance."

"I don't like mysteries, Alex. I am bewildered by your presence here. I am puzzled to account for your father's allowing you to come to England alone and with no particular destination in view. How he who guarded you as the apple of his eye ever suffered you to wander so far in search of a situation as companion, is an incomprehensible mystery. Your youth, beauty, and ignorance of the world, are so many sources of peril to you. Your father has sufficient income to keep you with him. It seems to me that Mr. Strange has lost control of his mind—"

"You misjudge him and me, too, Vane."

"Then what is this mystery, darling?"

"I cannot tell you. Trust me, Vane. Trust me absolutely, or give me up. There is a mystery, I acknowledge it to you; but no one else must suspect it. Vane, believe in me, or let me slip out of your life altogether. You know whether I am likely to do anything foolish or quixotic."

She raised her face again to his inspection. Every feature was instinct with nobleness, purity and truthfulness. To doubt her was impossible.

"I trust you, Alex," said the young earl, with passionate emphasis. "I trust you utterly, I comprehend that you have some reason for being in England—some mission to fulfil. I will keep your secret with religious care. You will need aid in removing the 'obstacle' that prevents our marriage. Promise me to call upon me for whatever help I can render. I will work blindly, doing whatever you tell me."

"Then I will call upon you freely. Oh, Vane, since you trust me still, I cannot again feel so terribly alone. If only papa were here—if only—"

Her voice broke down in sudden sobs.

A little group approaching, Lord Kingscourt drew her from the cliff to the shelter of a clump of trees nearer the house, and took her in his arms and soothed and comforted her with passionate tenderness.

They had no time for further confidences, for suddenly a stealthy step approaching made them move forward in confusion.

As they emerged from the shadows they encountered Lady Markham, who regarded them both with suspicion and dislike.

"More mystery," muttered the baronet's widow, as she passed on with a slight inclination of the head. "I'll make her regret the day she ever entered the service of the Lady Vivian Clyffe."

CHAPTER XIX.

ALEX and Lord Kingscourt returned to the drawing-room, and discovered that no one, excepting Lady Markham, had noticed their absence.

The discovery was a relief to Alex, who had feared questioning. As she returned to her window seat she bade the young earl leave her lest his continuous attentions should attract observation.

"Don't send me away, Alex," he pleaded. "Lady Vivian desired me to pay especial attention to you. Everyone else is occupied, as you see."

Without waiting for a response he brought a large portfolio of engravings, and drew a low chair beside her, and displayed the pictures, while he talked in low tones inaudible at the distance of a few feet.

"I can hardly realise it is really you, Alex," he said, as he laid aside a picture which neither of them had seen, although both had regarded it intently. I have written to your father since my return to England, and begged him to reconsider his decision in regard to our marriage. The sight of you here to-night was a great shock as well as surprise to me. Providence has indeed watched over you in giving you so safe a refuge as this. Lady Vivian Clyffe is one of the noblest ladies in England—noble in nature as by birth. Is she not beautiful?"

Alex glanced towards the Lady Vivian. Her ladyship was engaged in an animated conversation with Lord Mountheron, and was absolutely radiant in beauty of feature and expression.

The splendour of her dusk loveliness was set off to advantage by her dress and jewels. The girl's heart beat hard and fast.

This beautiful lady, proud and cold in her magnificent beauty, was her father's divorced wife—her own mother. Her jealous pain made her sapphire eyes strangely troubled and anxious.

"Yes, she is beautiful!" she assented, in a whisper.

"And as good as she is beautiful!" declared Lord Kingscourt, with enthusiasm. "The world calls her heartless, but I know her well. I have known her from boyhood, for her unfortunate husband and my father were very intimate friends. She is not heartless, although she does not wear her heart upon her sleeve." She is a grand and noble woman, and if Lord Mountheron wins her for his wife he will be a fortunate man."

The girl's heart throbbed high with that new jealous pain.

"Do you think she will marry him?" she asked.

"Yes. He loves her with a passion of which one would not deem him capable. He has been her suitor for years, but not until lately did she show him especial favour. I have heard that they are betrothed. She accepts his homage as if he were nearer to her than a mere friend."

The Lady Vivian's head was slightly inclined towards her suitor. They were in the midst of a gay argument in which both seemed deeply interested.

"Do you suppose that the Lady Vivian loves Lord Mountheron?" she asked, in a voice that had grown curiously strained and hard.

"Yes. Why should she not? He loves her, and love begets love. She is a widow, and childless. Her position is not altogether pleasant. She once expected to be Marchioness of Mountheron; the title is now within her grasp. Her life is lonely, notwithstanding she is a belle. I am sure she would be happy in a second marriage."

Alex turned the conversation abruptly.

"I have heard the story of her first marriage," she said. "A woman at the Mount Heron Arms told me about the Mount Heron Tragedy. Do you think that Lord Stratford Heron was guilty of his brother's murder?"

She awaited his reply with breathless eagerness.

"No one believes in Lord Stratford Heron's innocence," replied Lord Kingscourt, gravely. "He was found guilty upon a fair trial and was condemned to die. I have no knowledge of the case beyond the evidence, which I have carefully read. I cannot see how the verdict could have been other than it was."

Alex drew away from her lover slightly.

"I—I thought," she said, "that some one might have deemed him falsely accused and unjustly condemned. The evidence was circumstantial. And Mrs. Goff told me that he had always born a high reputation for honour and goodness until he was accused of murder."

"No man was more highly esteemed in England. He was the soul of honour. He was uprightness itself. He was loved by the poor, and the tenantry fairly adored him!"

"Yet everyone condemned him as soon as he was arrested. The radical newspapers demanded his execution upon the supposition that

his high birth might screen him from the doom that falls upon the poor criminal. No one believed in his innocence—"

"Because the evidence against him was overwhelming; because he possessed an impulsive nature and hot temper that might easily lead him into disaster under such provocation. But this is no subject for your pure ears, Alex," he added, marking her eagerness of expression. "Mrs. Goff might have been in better business than rehearsing the story of the Mount Heron Tragedy to a young girl like you?"

Alex's pale cheeks flushed. She wondered what Lord Kingscourt would say if he knew that that tragedy had darkened her life, that it was the obstacle between them; if he knew that it was her self-imposed mission to discover the real murderer of her uncle and restore her father to his own again.

Another of the guests drawing near, the conversation of the lovers turned upon the pictures.

At eleven o'clock the carriages were brought around and the guests from Mount Heron took their leave, setting out on their return to the castle. The Clyffe House guests withdrew to their rooms. Lady Vivian, Lady Markham, and Alex lingered in the great drawing-room until the others were gone.

"Have you enjoyed the evening, Miss Strange?" asked the Lady Vivian, with a smile at her young companion. "You have not found the time long, I hope?"

"No, thank you," replied Alex. "The evening was pleasanter than I expected."

"Our month here is one of continual festivity," said Lady Vivian. "There has been so far a constant exchange of courtesies between us and our friends at Mount Heron. They have dined here two or three times, and my guests have been to the castle once or twice, although I did not accompany them. We have had garden, croquet and archery parties. We are invited to dine at the castle the day after tomorrow. You will enjoy your visit to the historical old seat of the Mountherons."

"Shall you go, Lady Vivian?" inquired Lady Markham.

"I have not yet decided."

"You are in doubt, then?" said Lady Markham, with a pleased look. "I am glad to hear it. Once you get over your morbid dread of visiting the castle, you will be able to enjoy our festivities as much as your guests do. I hope you will go. I shall think poorly of Lord Mountheron's powers of persuasion if he fails to induce you to attend that dinner."

Lady Vivian's pale olive face flushed, but she allowed the conversation to drop.

(To be Continued.)

SAGACITY OF A CIRCUS HORSE.

WITHOUT deprecating modern establishments of this kind, our recollections go back to Astley's Amphitheatre, near Westminster Bridge, as it used to be thirty or forty years ago, under the management of the late Mr. Ducrow. The feats there performed by some of the horses were exceedingly wonderful. The animals seemed to possess a degree of human intelligence. They were accomplished actors. Their powers of simulation with a view to entertain spectators went far beyond what anyone could expect whose knowledge is confined to the ordinary class of horses. We will mention a few particulars regarding the horses at Astley's, as they occur to our memory:

One evening the performance represented a house on fire. All the inhabitants of the dwelling had managed to escape except a lady in an upper story. You could see her at a window throwing about her arms wildly, and screaming for help. Her appeals to the assembled crowd beneath were heartrending. The firemen could not reach her, for the staircase was seemingly in a blaze, and there was no fire-escape.

The spectators in the theatre were wrought up to an agony, it being but too evident that the poor lady was doomed to perish by a painful and violent death. In the midst of the commotion a

horse which belonged to the lady rushed upon the stage. In its stable it heard the screams of its mistress, and hastened to do its best to save her. Without saddle or bridle it was seen to rush into the house, and climb the stairs amid flames and volumes of smoke. It reached the apartment where the lady was. She mounted on its back, holding by the mane, and the horse, descending the stairs, brought her safely to the ground. Prolonged shouts of applause rewarded the hazardous exploit. The whole thing was a beautiful piece of acting, evoking throughout sentiments of pleasure and admiration. Nothing but kindness and long training could have made the horse so clever in knowing what to do and doing it so well. The feat was the more surprising as horses usually have a dread of fire which is not easily conquered. It will be understood that the fire had been so adroitly managed as to effect no injury on the theatre, and that there never had been any real danger.

THE CHIN.

FORTUNE-TELLERS are generally skilful physiognomists, and all the features of the human face do their share in enlightening the understanding of the seers. The chin, at the present day, is rather difficult to read, on account of the increasing custom of wearing a beard. A good chin should neither project nor retreat much. A very retreating chin denotes weakness; and a projecting one, harsh strength, united with firmness amounting to obstinacy. A pointed chin generally denotes acuteness. A soft, fair, double chin generally denotes a love of good living; and an angular chin, judgment and firmness.

Flatness of chin implies coldness; a small chin, fear; sharp indentings in the middle of the chin point to a cool understanding. The colour and texture of the skin, and of the hair and beard, have also direct harmony with the features. These should be studied more than they have been. A facility in drawing faces is of great use to the student of physiognomy, as it enables him to note peculiarities of feature which no written description would be capable of preserving.

A CHAPTER OF FIRST THINGS.

The first almanack was printed by George von Purbach in 1460.

The first copper cent was coined at New Haven in 1787.

First watches were made at Nuremberg in 1477.

The omnibus was built at Paris in 1827.

Omnibuses were introduced in New York in 1838.

The first college in the United States was founded in 1636.

The first compass was used in France in 1150, though the Chinese are said to have employed the loadstone earlier.

The first chimneys were introduced into Rome from Padua in 1368.

The first newspaper advertisement appeared in 1652.

The first air pump was made in 1650.

The first algebra, originated with Diophantus, in either the fourth or six century.

The first balloon ascent was made in 1783.

The first national bank in the United States was incorporated by Congress, December 31, 1871.

The first attempt to manufacture pins in America was made soon after the war of 1812.

The first printing press in the United States was introduced in 1692.

Coaches were first used in England in 1568.

Gas was first used as an illuminating agent in 1702. Its first use in New York was in 1827.

The first glass factory in the United States of which we have definite knowledge was built in 1780.

Gold was discovered in California in 1843.

The first use of a locomotive in America was 1829.

The first daily newspaper in the United States was published in Boston, September 25, 1660. The first religious newspaper, the Boston "Recorder," was established in 1815.

Organs are said to have been first introduced into churches by Pope Vitalianus, about A.D. 670.

The steel pen was made in 1803.

The first machine for carding, rolling, and spinning cotton, made in the United States, was manufactured in 1786.

Envelopes were first used in 1839.

The first complete sewing machine was patented by Elias Howe, Jr., in 1846.

The first iron steamship was built in 1830.

Ships were first "copper-bottomed" in 1783.

The first telegraphic instrument was successfully operated by S. F. B. Morse, the inventor, in 1835, though its utility was not demonstrated to the world until 1844.

The first lucifer match was made in 1829.

The first steamboat plied the Hudson in 1807.

The first society for the exclusive purpose of circulating the Bible was organised in 1805, under the name of "British and Foreign Bible Society."

The entire Hebrew Bible was printed in 1848.

The first society for the promotion of Christian knowledge was organised in 1698.

Kerosene was first used for lighting purposes in 1826.

The first Union flag was unfurled on the 1st of January, 1776, over the camp at Cambridge. It had thirteen stripes of white and red, and retained the English cross in one corner.

The first steam engine on the continent of America was brought from England in 1753.

The first saw-maker's anvil was brought to America in 1819.

The first temperance society in America was organised in Saratoga County, N. Y., in March, 1808.

Glass was early discovered. Glass beads were found on mummies over 3,000 years old.

Glass windows were introduced into England in the eighth century.

The first telescope was probably used in England in 1608.

Anæsthesia was discovered in 1844.

America was discovered in 1492.

A HASTY MARRIAGE.

"Is Warren Lorraine stopping in this hotel?" The clerk glanced over his books.

"He has been. He went away a week ago."

"There was a moment's pause."

"Do you know where?" a kind of discouraged faintness in the voice.

The clerk looked at his questioner.

She was a woman of some twenty-five or thirty years—pretty once, perhaps, but looking tired and worn now.

"I do not know. He intended to return. Mrs. Lorraine is still here."

"Mrs. Lorraine! His wife?"

The words were sharp and eager. The man began to guess at something dramatic.

"Yes, madame."

The woman stood silent, her face very white with a grey shade about the set mouth. The clerk waited, watching her with languid interest.

"I will see this—lady," turning toward him.

"Please ascertain if she can receive me."

He touched a bell.

"You wish to send your name?" politely reminding her of her omission while the messenger waited.

"A friend of Mr. Lorraine," sharply. "The name is not necessary."

In the few minutes that elapsed before her message was replied to she stood motionless and rigid.

There were groups scattered about the parlour, talking loud or low of their various private affairs.

They saw a plainly-dressed woman standing alone, as if ill at ease.

Then she was summoned to Mrs. Lorraine's private parlour.

The room was empty when she entered. She would not sit, remaining on her feet facing the inner door.

It opened presently, and a girl came out, glancing up at her visitor's face with eyes that tried to recognise her.

"I am Mrs. Lorraine," she said, gently, after a pause that was growing awkward.

"And I am Mrs. Lorraine," harshly.

The young woman started and grew a little paler at the tone.

She was very young and very beautiful, slight and dark and graceful.

But her face was anxious and troubled, with that air of watching about it which every one can read and no one define.

"You wished to see me?"

"I wished to see my husband. Warren Lorraine. I heard that he was stopping at this house, and came here to find him; and instead I find you."

"There must be a mistake," still gently. "My husband is Warren Lorraine, of Liverpool. We landed here three weeks ago."

"My husband is Warren Lorraine, of Liverpool. He left me two years ago, and went to Germany. Since that time I have not heard of him, till now."

They stood facing each other, looking into each other's eyes. Neither flinched under the scrutiny.

"I have two children at home. Warren Lorraine is twenty-eight years old; his birthday came the twenty-fifth of last month. He was light complexion, is broad-shouldered and tall. Sings well—a tenor."

The child face before her was growing whiter and whiter.

There was something almost awful in the suppressed way in which she trifling details were given.

"I am his wife," with steady intenance. "I was married in Dresden six months ago."

"We cannot both be. I have the oldest claim. I can prove it."

"You must."

"I will wait here half an hour," and she went away.

Mrs. Lorraine sat quietly down when she found herself alone.

She did not grow faint; she had need, and felt it, of all her faculties. She had told the truth about her marriage.

Two years before, when she was barely seventeen, she had gone abroad with some distant relatives.

They had met the Jacksons, who had been living abroad for five years, combining the advantages of cheap living and a continental education for the young Jacksons, whose name was Legion.

With them, having joined them through one of the chances of travel, was Warren Lorraine, who had taken a fancy to cross the Channel and see the mainland.

Some service had introduced him to the Jacksons, who encouraged the acquaintance.

"One of the Liverpool Lorraines. We know the family perfectly well. He has been everywhere, and knows everything, and is so thoroughly a gentleman."

So Mrs. Jackson, a shrewd woman of the world, discoursed to Mrs. Deming.

And the young man apparently found the society of the Jacksons as "delightful" as his was represented to be.

And Louise Jackson congratulated herself on being the central attraction, till all once it was discovered that not she, but Louise Capel, was the magnet.

That young lady found her music and her teaching not so utterly absorbent as before. All at once she put away childish things, and found that she had come to a woman's estate of loving.

The young man's story was smooth and apparently fair enough.



["MUSIC HATH CHARMS."]

The Jacksons were quite willing to vouch for him.

Perhaps if Louise had been really a daughter of the house, the wedding would hardly have taken place so speedily.

But she was penniless; she had no nearer relatives to be consulted; there seemed after all no great risk to be run—and so they were married.

"Let's go to China for a wedding trip, and so home across the other side of the world," and Louise, who would have followed him to the moon instead of the ends of the earth, if he had asked, did not object.

And now they were in Scotland, and Lorraine was apparently as fond of his lovely young wife as ever.

And then this had come.

She had not to wait a half hour for her visitor's return.

The woman was back again presently. She had a package of letters in her hand.

"This is my marriage certificate," unfolding the document. "And these are letters written at various times before he left me; one, you will see, after the steamer had sailed from Liverpool."

Louise glanced at the papers. The woman went on:

"We cannot allow the possibility of a mistake. It is too serious a matter for both of us. I am willing to wait, if you wish it, until I can bring proof of my identity from the East, and until I can see him. Where is he?"

"I do not know. He went away ten days ago for three years. I have not heard of him since."

"Has he left you?"

"I do not know," in the same dreary, dead voice. "Do you love him?" looking curiously into the older woman's face.

"Love him! I did love him—years ago. If I was not so poor, I would go away now, and never trouble you again."

"But you are his wife," with a moan. And then there was silence between the two.

Louise arose at last, and went into the inner room.

She walked like one who is asleep or numb with cold.

Mrs. Lorraine heard her moving quietly about for a little while, then all was still.

She sat listening for a time, till by-and-bye she grew alarmed.

She was sorry for the girl; so sorry that by-and-bye she would almost be ready to wish she had never told her story.

She ventured to open the door softly. The room was empty.

Ten minutes before the office clerk said to a subordinate:

"Wasn't that Mrs. Lorraine who just went out?"

"The lady in the dark dress? Yes."

"Is that woman up in her rooms yet? There has been some kind of a row. Make up your mind to that."

• • • • •

"Grover says you're looking out for a wife." "Grover chatters like a woman, with the acuteness left out."

"But is it true?" the other persisted.

"If you had any sense of your own impertinence, I should tell you to mind your business."

"But I haven't, you see. Tell the truth, doctor."

"Yes. And I shall not find her."

"There is plenty of the article here. What do you want?"

"You wouldn't comprehend if I should tell you. And the one I should want wouldn't take me."

He rose as he spoke—a dark, tall, powerfully-built man, with a strong, grave face—by no means handsome.

There was a heaviness in his demeanour, whether he spoke or moved, the reverse of graceful.

"Money?"

"No. I haven't any myself."

His companion stared, and then laughed.

"A Warrington reason. Beauty?"

"I should like it."

"Because you have it yourself. Sense, of course?"

"Absolutely sense, if nothing else. And the face of a woman's accepting me would be almost conclusive proof that she hadn't it."

"Let me introduce you to Mrs. Bernard."

"Where is Mr. Bernard?"

"Sleeping the sleep of the just, presumably. He is in the white-and-lavender stage of affliction."

"I don't like widows."

"And this particular widow very probably wouldn't like you; but you might try her."

"No, thank you. I am going to the Peak this afternoon. Want to go?"

"For what?"

"For the walk. I've lounged about these parlours till I feel as if I had been in prison a month."

"No, I thank you. I don't care for stiff joints and grazed bones for a week to come."

The doctor was not a ladies' man. When he said he was looking for a wife, he might have said truly enough that he had had that on his mind ever since he was a boy.

But he was shy, reserved, utterly destitute of the current coin of small talk; fastidious in his tastes; exacting in his judgments.

Adding to this list the fact that he was ruggedly plain in looks, and it will not seem strange that his acquaintance with the gentler sex was wholly professional.

He went for his walk that afternoon. He stood on the top of the Peak, and drew his great lungs full of mountain air. Also he desisted showers gathering about the horizon, and concluded to get back again without undue loss of time.

But the storm was too quick for him. The first great drops struck him just as he stepped under the shelter of a rough summer-house built for the accommodation of picnic parties, a mile from the hotel.

It was a real mountain storm of the severest sort.

Sheets of water—a steady glare of lightning, an incessant roll of thunder.

Great branches of trees were twisted and broken in the wind; small rivers raced down the hill paths.

In the midst of the uproar he became "aware of a presence."

A woman stood just within the door, too utterly disordered with the tempest to be conscious of much but the fact that she had attained shelter.

She was a pitiable object. A little creature. Streams of water ran out of her clothing as she stood; her muslin hat dropped over her face, down which little rivulets trickled from her soaked hair.

The doctor caught himself on the edge of a smile.

When had he ever before smiled in a woman's presence on his first meeting her? But he had such an immeasurable advantage now in appearances.

"The storm drove me in," she said, as if her coming in needed explanation.

"I was more fortunate than you," politely, "I did not get wet."

"I did," soberly, glancing down at herself.

And then a blue, blinding flash filled the little room, with a rending crash accompanying it.

The lady caught her breath.

"That was very close," the doctor said, slightly pale himself. "Let us hope that was the culminating point of the disturbance."

She dragged herself to a bench, and sat down with a small lake gathering about her feet. She threw off the soaked hat, finished letting down her already half-fallen hair, and proceeded to wring the water out of it.

With traditional suspicion, the doctor immediately saw intense coquetry in the act. But it was splendid hair, dark and heavy and a yard long.

Nobody said anything more while the winds blew and the rain beat.

Presently the lady began shaking, as if in an argue.

"The wind is going down. I think we must try and get on. This place is no longer a shelter."

And so at last they reached the hotel, though the rain still fell heavily. For the last half mile Dr. Warrington had almost to carry his companion.

Later, dry and clothed, and walking the hall while he waited for tea and wondered about the lady, she came down the stairs.

She was pale, and did not look thoroughly warmed yet.

"I told you to stay in bed," somewhat arbitrarily.

"But I didn't intend to obey. I am not of such frail stuff, physically speaking. I was more frightened than hurt."

A week later people were saying to each other:

"Mrs. Bernard has actually continued to fascinate that queer, grim Dr. Warrington. What does she see in him? One might think a man as old as he is might see through her airs and graces. But that is the kind of man who always gets caught."

Mrs. Bernard had certainly reached the "white-and-lavender stage of affliction" in her dress, but she never in any way referred to the deceased Mr. Bernard.

Dr. Warrington used to wonder what manner of man he had been, which unprofitable vein of speculation would usually last till his cigar had gone out.

It was his first vacation after five years of hard work, and there were but two weeks more of it left.

He counted the days with a feverish feeling of impatience at their fewness.

Singleness of aim had been one of his peculiarities all his life long.

I do not suppose that he thought of such a thing as being in love with Mrs. Bernard, but he thought of her, and of no one else, almost constantly.

He was about his usual train of thought the morning when she came out and stood beside him.

"Money has prevented almost as much success as it has helped."

"And yet, after all, it is a very comfortable thing to have, Dr. Warrington. Average people are a great deal better and happier with than without it. I should be very sorry to lose mine."

He looked at her with a kind of slow intentness.

"You are rich, you are young, you have beauty and brains, cultivated tastes and leisure to gratify them. You ought to be a very happy woman."

"Am I not?" with a suppressed sigh. "You would not call me unhappy?"

"I do not know. You give me a strange feeling of being unsatisfied. It is because women's lives are so shut in by limitations? You see I am not accomplished in this branch of study."

"And you have chosen me as a subject. Dr. Warrington, I warn you off. You will not reach

a single just conclusion. There is Laura Forbes. You will do much better to study her," as the slender, graceful, haughty blonde came down the room.

Perhaps that was not quite generous of Mrs. Bernard.

The hotel public said that Miss Forbes would have found such a study mutually interesting.

"Dear Mrs. Bernard, I was looking for you. Cousin Fannie is going away to-day, and begs to hear you sing. She has never had that pleasure. We will send away Dr. Warrington, knowing your prejudices against a masculine audience."

Miss Forbes was a fluent talker. Mrs. Bernard's face took on an inscrutable look during the long sentence.

"I shall be glad to oblige your cousin. Dr. Warrington need not be disturbed on my account."

Dr. Warrington hated parlour music. He wished just now that he had been in the uttermost parts of the house, at least.

But there seemed no decently-polite excuse for going away.

"Did you like the performance?" one of her brilliant smiles stirring her red lips. But to Warrington's eyes it reached no farther than her lips.

Her eyes were deep and shadowy still.

He was a slow man, as I have said.

With that other impression fresh upon him, he could not just at once strike the new key.

"I liked it," he said, gravely, "as much as I care for any singing—more than I ever cared before. I am not musical. Mrs. Bernard, I wish you would come and walk; I want to talk to you."

"I am afraid I am not in a mood for talk. Let me sing to you. You can't decline, you know, when a lady offers."

And she did what she had not done before in the house—sang for a man; sang a German air with German words, as thoroughly at home as in her own smooth English.

"You did not dislike that?" looking at his flushed, troubled face.

"Your accent is perfect."

"You are very good. But the music?" mischievously.

"You are the only woman I ever heard whose singing was endurable. Yours is enough to make a man wish he could listen for ever," abruptly.

She grew a little paler, but she did not lose her presence of mind.

He bowed, and she went away.

"Sold for a song," he said, over and over to himself, till his senses began to settle themselves in every-day order.

He was too practical and blessed with common sense not to have the habit of his life to assert itself.

She was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen.

He was in love with her—he, John Warrington, who had come to be thirty-five years old untouched by any such malady.

"Of course I cannot see her as other people. I don't want to. I love her. There is only one thing to do. I must take my chances as other men do," and with that conclusion he came to his feet.

He was late to his tea.

So was Mrs. Bernard.

They two sat alone at one end of the long room.

"Have you had a pleasant day?" in her sweetest and most artificial way.

"Exceedingly pleasant," in a voice that was almost a growl.

"Tell me about it. It seems not to have left you in the most serene frame of mind."

"Very well. The toast is cold—a damp chip."

"The tea is not cold. I have just scalded myself. I shall have to call for your professional services," putting out her hand, wet and red a little.

There was no one in the room.

He took the small fingers and scrutinised them gravely.

"It is not serious, I think. Mrs. Bernard, I

have been making up my mind to ask for this very gift—your hand for the rest of my life."

She looked at him with widening eyes, astonished and a little indignant, it seemed.

"I had not supposed Dr. Warrington a man who would jest in such a way."

"A jest, madame?" angry in his turn. "I am not a fortunate man in my choice of times, certainly, but I was never more in earnest in my life."

She laughed then, a musical, sweet laugh enough, but rather forced, too.

"It is all alike. I introduced myself to you in a flood, and you—say what you have just said over cold toast."

But the frown on his face was changing to a look of pain.

"Forgive me," she said, gently. "I have no right to hurt you. Forget that you have spoken, Dr. Warrington. It is all that either of us can do."

"I do not forget so easily. I have not spent half a lifetime waiting for this to let it go in an hour. I shall come again."

And with the most courtly bow he had ever made in his life Dr. Warrington withdrew to the piazza, where the comers by the afternoon train were already assembled.

A voice with a husky croak in it was saying:

"Who is that small woman in the white dress—the one with the purple ribbons?"

"That is Mrs. Bernard—a young widow."

"Bernard! her name is no more Bernard than mine is. I know her."

For some reason that he did not understand himself, Dr. Warrington turned back towards the lawn.

But Mrs. Bernard was already half way up the steps.

"There is an old friend—I mean 'mine old familiar enemy.' I must go and propitiate her," she said, in an undertone, as they met.

"She has begun being unpleasant," in the same tone.

Mrs. Bernard's sweet lips set a little firmer, but she went on.

"I believe in Mrs. Bernard myself," Dr. Warrington said, slowly. "I shall stand by her. I don't know nor care how she got her name nor money. She's a sweet, honest, generous woman. If I am wrong I will find out my mistake for myself."

So Dr. Warrington changed his mind about going away next morning, and without a word to anybody telegraphed to his sister to join him.

"I'll abide by Amy's decision. She will know by instinct if these women are right. Meanwhile—"

And the doctor looked black.

Mrs. Bernard looked wearied and sad next morning.

She glanced at him half apprehensively when they met in the hall.

"Good-morning," cheerily. "It is a lovely morning for our ride."

Most of the ladies in the house made common cause against Mrs. Bernard.

There was a chill of almost formal politeness in their intercourse with her, and a marked avoidance of her society.

She seemed not to notice, but kept the even tenor of her way.

Hattie Thorpe won Fred Gordon's everlasting gratitude by openly coming out on the weaker side.

"It's a risk, you know, Miss Hattie. We don't know. A man can take such a stand better than a woman."

She looked at him with a curling lip. Her mother's mouth, with a difference.

"I know a lady when I see one."

And Dr. Warrington prayed that Amy would come before matters grew any worse.

They were sitting on the piazza in the moonlight, a group of ladies, Mrs. Bernard among them.

Dr. Warrington had come up just as Mrs. Davis began speaking.

But he stood in the shadow, and she did not know he was there.

"A story, young ladies, I've just thought of. Let it be a warning to you about the acquaintances you make. A friend of mine wrote it me. A couple were stopping at one of the hotels where she lived. The man had gone away on business, and left the woman to wait for him. She was living there as fine as you please when wife number one appeared, and informed my lady that she was no wife at all. It seems that she had picked him up somewhere when she was travelling as a governess or lady's maid or something, and thought it would be a great thing; and they were married, or she said they were."

I suppose not a soul within hearing knew what was meant.

Warrington clenched his fists and ground his teeth, standing in the background.

"Where does the warning come in, Mrs. Davis?" asked Hattie Thorpe's clear voice. "And what became of the poor girl?"

"What does become of such people? What would you have done, Mrs. Bernard?"

Warrington took one step forward. He could see her face, ghastly white and rigid, but her voice was even when she spoke, and she answered immediately:

"One never knows what one will do in an emergency. Tragedies of that sort are so infrequent that one does not need to speculate much."

Warrington was in the group now, proposing a walk to a cascade in the neighbourhood.

"Boots and thick wraps, ladies." And everybody vanished to their rooms except Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Bernard.

He spoke to her in a voice too low for her neighbour to hear.

"The halls are empty. Let me take you upstairs."

She rose feebly.

"Mrs. Davis is watching," he whispered, and strength came back to her step once more.

"It is my story," she said, when they were alone in the upper corridor. "It is true. I came to Mrs. Bernard, a distant cousin. She took me in, and when she died gave me her money if I took her name."

"I shall send you a sleeping-potion before I leave the house. Drink it, and let that be the last thing for to-night. To-morrow you may think, but not before."

When the party came back at eleven, dew-drenched and chilly, a lady elaborately attired was waiting in the parlour.

She claimed Dr. Warrington as her brother, and several people at once discovered that Mrs. Livingston, whose reputation was something indisputable for wealth and taste, had arrived.

At breakfast next morning Dr. Warrington was anxious and doubtful.

"I doubt if she will come down. She must have nerves of steel if she does. I shall depend on your judgment."

She did come—as white as the dress she wore.

Mrs. Livingston gave one look, laid down her knife and fork, astonished her brother, herself, and other people by walking across the room and laying her hand on Mrs. Bernard's shoulder.

"Louise, don't you know me?"

And then there followed a quiet little scene, at which the other breakfasters assisted by staring mightily.

"My old schoolmate, Louise Capel. I knew her abroad, too, when we were in Dresden," she said, when they had rejoined Dr. Warrington.

Later they talked over her story—they two alone.

"He is dead," with a quiver about the lips. "I saw his name among those killed in a street disturbance. When your brother asked me to marry him I could not answer him."

"You do not love him?" Amy asked, on her knees beside her friend.

"If you could know what he has been to me these dreadful days since Mrs. Davis came. And I have deceived him."

"Let me plead for him, dear. He will not blame you. If you only knew him."

"I could not believe him nobler. But he must not ask me again."

Dr. Warrington was standing by the bedside of a man whom had just dragged through a brain fever.

He was going to recover if he would let himself.

"I wish you would tell me your story," the doctor was saying. "You have dropped enough of it in your illness to make me curious." There was a strange look about his lips as he spoke. "In the first place, is your name Warren Lorraine?"

"Yes."

"Then will you be good enough to tell me what became of Louise Capel after your first wife visited her in that hotel?"

The invalid groaned.

"Heaven knows. And that was my Cousin Warren's wife. I came back in less than twelve hours, and heard the whole story from her. I tell you I gave up everything, and have spent five years in searching. One might as well have tried to trace a drop of water. How did you know?" with a sudden grasp at a new idea.

"Because she is at present visiting my sister. It won't hurt him," as his patient dropped limp in a dead faint.

Two hours later Dr. Warrington was telling his sister the whole story.

"Help me out, Amy. I have done all I can. Keep her out of my sight. I won't have thanks or a scene. I don't want to quite hate him. I shall pack a trunk and go—anywhere—till this is over."

"John, John!" with a half cry.

"Don't you begin. I have more than I can stand now, darling," and his face was hidden in his sister's lap, and he sobbed there as he had done over boyish griefs years before.

Whatever Warren Lorraine guessed, neither he nor his wife mentioned the doctor's name for many months after that.

Happy?

Yes, I think they are. Happiness is a complex sentiment.

As for John Warrington, it is "once for all" with him.

He has had his story, and it is ended for this life.

K. R.

FACETIÆ.

CRUEL HOAX—To take Cleopatra's Needle to sea (see), when it hasn't an eye! —Judy.

FOOD FOR "POWDER."—Black-currant jam. —Funny Folks.

ONE POINT CLEAR.

CLEOPATRA'S Needle is properly named. It has already been the means of giving us a "pretty piece of work." —Funny Folks.

In England there are five sexes—the male-sex, the female sex, Es-sex, Sus-sex, and Middle-sex. —Funny Folks.

KNOWLEDGE—"The Seat of War," —Punch.

MEM FOR PARISIAN FLANEUR.

ABSINTHE is an acquired taste. The more you take it, the more you like it. "Absinthe makes the heart grow fonder." —Punch.

STERN PULPIT-CRITICS.

FIRST SCOT: "Fat sort o' minister hae ye gotten, Geordie?"

SECOND DITTO: "Oh, weel, he's no muckle worth. We seldom get a glint o' him. Sax days o' th' week he's enves'ble, and on the seventh he's incomprehens'ble!" —Punch.

NOTHING SO WONDERFUL.

It is reported that a Catholic lady, sister to a Liberal Earl, performed the feat, not long ago, of sweeping a London crossing for a day, on behalf of a charity. "The lady's benevolence," we read, is so real, that hardly a smile was raised at the curious achievement; and the perfect plainness of her habitual attire prevented

any fantastic public effect." The self-denial was, of course, beyond all praise; but, after all, there is nothing so unusual in a lady going out all day with her "broom." —Judy.

SHARPS AND FLATS.

A **CONTEMPORARY** devoted to the building trades, announces that "the number of persons in London who live on flats increases year by year." This is a fact which, when the police have done setting their own house in order, may profitably occupy the attention of Colonel Henderson. —Judy.

"REPAIRS NEATLY EXECUTED."

FARMER (anxiously inspecting strangers):—"What be they gentlemen doing, maister?"

VISITOR: "Sketching your house; they are artists, and maybe they will paint it."

FARMER: "Well I am sure, they be quite welcome; it wants it, and whitewashing too, mortal bad." —Fun.

THE FUND NOT ASSOCIATED WITH WEALTH. —A fund of humour. —Fun.

TO GARDENERS.—To destroy weeds: marry widows. —Fun.

A TREE-ON!

A NOISY TREE—The bay. A dusty tree—The ash. An aged tree—the elder. —Fun.

A CLEVER WOMAN.

This is the way they worked it up in one of the western journals: "Finding escape impossible, she threw a feather bed on the ground, and grasping her two children leaped from the second-story out upon it, did Mrs. Briggs. All three escaped unhurt." She was a noble woman to do so well after "finding escape impossible."

A LONG TIME.

The author of a not very brilliant new piece met a friend one day last week and gave him an order to see the piece in the evening. About midnight they met at a club, and the author's friend shook him cordially by the hand.

"It seems," he said, "an awful time since we met."

"Why," he replied, "I saw you this afternoon!"

"Ah, but I've sat out your piece since then!"

"COMIN' NEARER."

"Yes, de mince-pie season is comin' nearer," mused Brother Gardner, as he saw a man tacking up a mince-meat sign at the market, yesterday; "jogging right along dis way like a yoke o' oxen gwine home to tea after a hard day's work. Howsomer, de mince-pie season doan' neber worry me 'tall. In de fust place, de brandy an' de meat is so mixed up dat when you think you is drinking de brandy you is only nibbling on de meat, an' when you sets out to nibble de meat de brandy gits embarrassed in de windpipe. Dar isn't 'nuff meat to pay for de trouble ob chop-ping, an' too much brandy to frow away 'mong de chil'en."

He gave his back one more rub, and added:

"No, I haven't de least int'ress in de advent ob de mince-pie season, an' if dis lethargic feelin' is due to de fact dat I know of a family who is gwine to keep deir meat an' taters in de barn dis winter, den I can't help it."

A good little boy who was kicked by a mule did not say naughty words or go home crying to his mother. He just tied the mule within five feet of a beehive, backed him round to it, and let him kick.

When you offer a man a cigar, and he simulates hesitation, while all the time intending to accept it, may he not justly be considered a sort of playdoubt individual?

TRUTH.

"Far be it from us to doubt the word of a brother editor," says the "La Cross Sun," "we believe them all to be truthful men, but when the 'Durand Times' says that the water is so low at the mouth of the Chippewa river that catfish have to employ mud-turtles to tow them over the bar, we feel as though the editor must

be away, and some local minister filling his place."

HIGHLY COMMENDED.

TOM: "Dont'sh likesh to go 'oma. I'm afraidsh of my old ooman, Bill, ain'tsh you 'o youn?"

BILL: "Notsh a bit. I soon shets her up. Dontsh yer know she's a getting very thin on the topsh, so when she sauces I just getsh out my razor and stropsh it well—hic—on her baldsh head; itsh a deal better than hitting her."

—Fun.

A WELSH RABBIT.

A STURDY, hungry-looking individual stepped into a restaurant, and, after consulting the bill of fare, called for a Welsh rabbit. After a short time they brought the piece of bread neatly toasted, reposing in its bed of cheese, and, after looking at it intently for a moment, he asked:

"Is that a Welsh rabbit?"

"It is," was the answer.

He lifted it with a fork and looked under it.

"It is?" he echoed.

"Yes, sir, it's just what you called for—a Welsh rabbit."

"Well," replied the man, moving slowly back from the table, "you can take it away just the same, and bring me some beef, and remember that when I want fried cheese I'll call for it."

THE BASKET.

AN absent-minded gentleman got into a taxicab. He had a basket with him, and to make sure he would not forget it when he got out, he placed it securely between his feet.

During the ride, he engaged very earnestly in conversation with a gentleman, and when the car arrived at the place where he wished to alight, he hastily arose, and naturally kicked over the basket. He picked himself up, and exclaimed:

"What idiot left that basket there, for people to stumble over?" and got out of the car, leaving the basket where he had kicked it.

A YOUNGSTER who had been stung by a bee told his father that he kicked a bee that had a splinter in his tail.

JOHNNY lost his knife. After searching in one pocket and another until he had been through all, without success, he exclaimed:

"Oh dear, I wish I had another pocket, it might be in that."

A PREACHER was called upon by some of his congregation to pray for rain, of which the crops stood greatly in need. His reply was, that he would pray if his congregation desired it, but he was very sure it would not rain until the wind changed.

"WHAT under the sun can be the cause of that bell ringing to-day?" said young Sam, to his friend, as they approached a country village.

"If I was to express an opinion on the subject," returned Jack, solemnly, "I should say it is my deliberate opinion that somebody was pulling the rope."

FOUR brothers have got rich by drawing houses. One is a house-mover, one an architect, one an actor, and one had lucky tickets in a real estate lottery.

A DISCOVERY.

A MAN who had been out nearly all night told his wife on reaching home that he had made the important discovery that the earth had two moons as well as Mars.

Just before he got into bed he tried to blow out two flames of gas at the same time, and in consequence his wife places no confidence in his important discovery.

STATISTICS.

THE COST OF WAR.—The loss of lives and money in the wars of the last twenty-five years, 1852-77, is carefully compiled from the official statistics of the various nations concerned, and includes, in addition to the troops slain, a por-

tion of the deaths occasioned by the ravages of the wars among the civil population:—I. Lives lost, 1852-77—killed in battle, or died of wounds and disease.—Crimean War, 750,000; Italian War (1859), 45,000; war of Schleswig-Holstein, 3,000; American Civil War—the North, 280,000; the South, 520,000—800,000; war between Prussia, Austria and Italy, in 1866, 45,000; expeditions to Mexico, Cochin China, Morocco, Paraguay, &c., 65,000; Franco-German War of 1870-71—France, 155,000; Germany, 60,000—215,000; Turkish massacres of Christians in Bulgaria, Armenia, &c., 1876-77, 25,000; total, 1,948,000. II. Cost, 1852-77.—Crimean War, 340 million pounds; Italian War of 1859, 60 millions; American Civil War—the North, 940 millions; the South, 460 millions—1,400 millions; Schleswig-Holstein War, seven millions; Austrian and Prussian War (1866), 66 millions; expeditions to Mexico, Morocco, Paraguay, &c. (say only) 40 millions; Franco-Prussian War, 500 millions; total, 2,413 million pounds.

"ODDS AND ENDS."

In this busy, fast, progressive day
Do we ever pause in our onward way,
And gravely think how much depends
For a useful life on the odds and ends?

The fragments clipped from the morn-
ing hour,

The minutes-passed in some rosy bower;
The few kind words we did not speak
To the sad heart languishing and weak.

We often sigh, or fume and fret
For the golden "luck" we did not get,
Instead of striving to make amends
By looking out for the odds and ends.

In garnering precious shreds of time
In the saving up of cent and dime;
In the use of tact in time of need,
Thus reaping "luck" from the buried seed.

The curious nest in the old oak tree,
With its woven threads we often see,
Where grace with beauty wisely blends
And yet 'tis made of the odds and ends.

Proud structures on the sea and land,
The stately ship, the mansion grand;
Aye! all things underneath the sun
Are fragments added one by one.

Then let us in this world of strife,
If we would lead a happy life
And prosper, fail not, oh, my friends,
To gather up the odds and ends.

M. A. K.

GEMS.

GIVE your warmest sympathies for each other's trials.

If one is angry, let the other part the lips only for a kiss.

NEGLECT the whole world beside, rather than one another.

THAT laughter costs too much which is purchased by the sacrifice of decency.

A FIRM faith is the first theology; a good life the best philosophy; a clear conscience the best law; honesty the best policy; and temperance the best physic.

A TRUE friend is distinguished in the crisis of hazard and necessity; when the gallantry of his aid may show the worth of his soul and the loyalty of his heart.

HE who wishes to comprehend the present and understand the future, must take his lesson from the past; for it is there that it finds the roots of the present and the germs of the future.

THE aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think; rather to improve our minds so as to make us think for

ourselves, than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CUP CAKE.—Put three even coffee-cupfuls into a sieve with one even teaspoonful of soda, two teaspoonfuls cream tartar; sift it on a large dish, break three eggs into a pan, beat well, then add one and a half cupfuls granulated sugar, half cupful soft butter, stir all till light and creamy, then add one cupful milk; stir a few times only, now add gradually the flour, beat well, flavour with lemon or almond; it will make two moderate-sized cakes; throw a handful of currants or stoned raisins into one.

BEAUTIFUL WHITE FINISH.—A beautiful finish may be given to parlours or extra work in houses, by mixing zinc white in white dammar varnish. This forms the china gloss of commerce.

SCOTCH COLLOPS.—Get two pounds of round of steak, chopped fine; put in a frying-pan a lump of butter half the size of an egg, melt, dredge in a little flour, brown, and then put a cupful of water or more; stir to make a gravy; chop up an onion, put it in; then put in beef-steak; stir often, and cook twenty minutes.

PLAIN JOHNNY-CAKE.—One cupful flour, two cupfuls Indian meal, yellow; one tablespoonful sugar, one good teaspoonful baking powder. For the liquid—Two eggs, one cupful milk, sweet or sour; one cupful water, pinch of salt; mix the dry and wet in separate dishes; then throw them together, beat up well, pour into a greased pan, and bake in a quick oven.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It is a remarkable coincidence that the storm which wrecked the "Royal Charter" on the coast of North Wales took place on the same morning in 1852, namely, October 15, as the hurricane which has just caused such wide spread damage.

THE DOUBLE POSTAL CARD.—A new style of postal card is now used in Germany. It consists of two cards of the ordinary size attached together, each having a postal stamp. These double cards are furnished by the post-office, and sent for the purpose of facilitating the return of answers.

A NEW STYLE OF DRIVING.—An account comes from France of a new invention for "driving by electricity." Under the coachman's seat is placed an electro-magnet, from which one wire is carried along one of the reins to the horse's bit, and another to the crupper, so that the whole length of the animal's spine forms part of an electric circuit. A sudden shock, which the driver can administer at discretion, will, it is said, bring the most obstreperous runaway to a sudden stop, and will arrest the most inveterate jibber. A series of small shocks will, it is said, stimulate a "screw" to marvels of pace and style.

VIRGINIA WATER is likely to lose one of its special features, the model man-of-war, the "Royal Adelaide." By Admiralty orders a survey has been held as to the state and condition of the little vessel, and according to report she is quite worn out and not worth the cost of repair.

PRINCE BISMARCK expressed great satisfaction at the flourishing state of his forests at Louenberg, whence he has returned to Berlin. The timber grown on his estate is much appreciated by shipbuilders; no doubt the Prince equally appreciates it for the net revenue he derives from the sale varies between 210,000 and 300,000 marks per annum.

A LETTER from a resident at Teheran states that great preparations are already being made for the visit of the Shah to Europe next spring. One of the chief objects of his visit will be to see the Paris Exhibition.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS

S. V. T.—It is said that if strong hop tea be applied with the palm of the hand to any surface afflicted with pain, the pain in most cases will instantly disappear. Have the tea milk warm; dip your hand in the tea, then rub briskly up and down several times. If the pain be chronic it will require more rubbing to banish it. This treatment cures rheumatism, neuralgia, disease of the spine, congestion, pleurisy, kidney disease, disease of the heart, and a great many other diseases. Persons who are weak and debilitated can be put on their feet in a few days by this treatment. The rubbing must be done by a person of nervous temperament to ensure success.

READER.—Canaan was about 180 miles in length and the average breadth was 50 miles. This land has been known at different times by several names: (1), Land of Canaan, because it was first settled by Canaan, the grandson of Noah; (2), Land of Promise, on account of the promise made to Abraham that it should be given to his offspring; (3), Land of Israel, as it was inhabited by the descendants of Jacob, who received from the angel the name of Israel, or "a prince that prevails with God"; (4), Land of Judah, from the name of the chief of the twelve tribes; (5), the Holy Land, because it was chosen by God as the country in which His true worship should be preserved and in which His presence should be seen; (6), Palestine, a very old name, the Greek for Philistia, or the land of the people called the Philistines. Canaan was once a beautiful and fertile country, of which there is but little sign remaining in its present desolate and uncultivated state.

DAVID C.—Oliver Goldsmith was born at Roscommon, in Ireland, in 1729, died in 1774, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, his epitaph having been written by his friend Dr. Johnson.

CONSUM.—An adhesive material for uniting the different parts of leather may be made as follows: Take one pound of gutta percha, four ounces of india rubber, two ounces of pitch, ounce of shellac, two ounces of oil. Melt these ingredients and stir them well together, then apply the mixture while hot.

H. M. E.—Corks may be rendered impervious to air and other external influences by the following method: Melt together two parts of white wax and one part of beef suet; dip the corks in this mixture and immediately dry them in a stove upon an iron plate. Repeat this operation and the corks will then be fit for use.

MARK D.—To prevent rust mix with fat oil varnish four-fifths of well-refined spirits of turpentine. The varnish is to be applied by means of a sponge; and articles varnished in this manner will retain their metallic brilliancy and never contract any spots of rust. It may be applied to copper and to the preservation of philosophical instruments, which, by being brought into contact with water, are liable to lose their splendour and become tarnished.

E. R.—False or imitation diamonds are made so exquisitely that none but an experienced person can tell the difference. The false ones reflect the light. No stone but the diamond (an inferior sort) is used to cut glass. Diamonds reflect light, but do not shine in the dark with a light of their own.

GRATYERN.—The elder-flower water must be applied cold and frequently during several weeks before it will produce the desired effect in reference to the complexion. But in some cases nothing at all will remove freckles. A mole should only be removed by a surgical operation.

AN ANXIOUS ONE.—The pink is the emblem of true love. The primitive pink is simple red or white, and is scented. By cultivation the petals have been enlarged or multiplied, and its colour infinitely varied—from the darkest purple to the purest white, with all the hues of red, from the rich crimson to the pale rose, with which yellow is also frequently blended. In some varieties the colours are abruptly developed; but under every condition the pink retains its delicious spicy fragrance—and hence has been made the emblem of woman's love.

VIOLET.—A nose which gets red after walking or drinking hot tea denotes something wrong with the digestive organs. Medical advice should be taken.

ROSE.—Never mind the saying, "thrice a bridesmaid never a bride." It is an old-fashioned bit of nonsense, at which the girls of the present day should laugh. It originated in the ancient superstition about the number three.

IRRELAUD.—The phrase "a respectable man" ought to be taken as one which explains itself. Its general meaning cannot be mistaken; but it is sometimes used to describe a person who is in a very comfortable position of

CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15,

WILL BE ISSUED

OUR CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER,
PRICE TWOPENCE,

And will Contain some Well Written Tales by Authors of Great Repute.

40 PAGES.

BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED.

life, and is himself a very decent individual, but still not a "gentleman."

M. G. and M. D., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. M. G. is nineteen, medium height, dark hair, hazel eyes, fair. M. D. is eighteen, tall, brown hair, blue eyes, fair, of a loving disposition. Respondents must be tall, dark hair and eyes.

MARIAN and ALICE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Marian is twenty, brown hair and eyes, fair. Alice is twenty, dark, and domesticated. Respondents must be about twenty-four, and very fond of home.

CAPTAIN JACK, twenty-six, good-looking, wishes to correspond with a young lady. Must be thoroughly domesticated.

TIM and BOB, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Tim is twenty, tall, light brown hair and eyes, fair, fond of home. Bob is twenty-two, medium height, dark, brown hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated.

MAGGIE, LOTTIE, and ELIZA wish to correspond with three young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Maggie is twenty. Lottie is seventeen, brown hair, good-looking. Eliza is sixteen, handsome. Respondents must be about twenty-three, tall, fond of home, good-looking, loving.

THE WANDERER'S THOUGHTS.

Oh! to have wings like an eagle so bold,
To fly to my own native land,
That I might but gather the flowers as of old
And wreath them in garlands so grand;
That I might but hear the sweet birdies sing
Their songs as oft sung in the grove,
But lone I must stray in this land far away,
Far, far from those dear scenes I love.

'Tis sweet to remember a dear little wood
Where was such a nice trysting-place,
Where often with Jessie contented I've stood,
And gazed on her sweet loving face;
Or where in the summer with gay Ethelred
We gathered so many bright flowers,
Unthinking that time was fleeing away
Or that we'd been straying for hours.

Oh! sweet were those pleasures on that happy day
We had a pic-nic in the glade,
When Lucy and Annie went roving away
With their swains far into the shade;
And Jessie and I beneath our thorn-tree
So cosy and happy did lie,
Both thinking that Nature looked brighter to see,
And the reason we didn't know why.

So fondly I'm hoping that soon I again
Through the paths in the wood may stray,
As light in the heart and as joyous as then,
Resolved and contented to stay;
To see once again the faces so bright,
To hear all their voices say, "Come!"
To feel in my heart, as it beats with delight,
That still "there is no place like home."

S. B. N.

MAY S., twenty-four, medium height, fair, would like to correspond with a dark young gentleman about twenty-eight.

DAISY, twenty-five, fair, tall, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young man about the same age.

JAMES and JOSEPH, two signalmen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with young ladies. James is twenty-one, fair, brown hair and eyes, good-looking, fond of home and children. Joseph is twenty-four, fair, of a loving disposition.

POLLY and VIOLA, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Polly is seventeen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, handsome, of a loving disposition, fond of music and dancing. Viola is eighteen, tall, dark, fond of home, brown hair and eyes.

EMMA and ALICE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Emma is twenty-one, dark brown hair, dark eyes, medium height, fond of home and children. Alice is eighteen, light brown hair, medium height.

EMILY and ADA, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Emily has dark hair and eyes, good-looking, fond of home and children. Ada is tall, good-looking, of a loving disposition.

LOTTIE and KATE wish to correspond with two young men. Lottie is seventeen, medium height, dark eyes, good-looking. Kate is sixteen, fair, of a loving disposition.

W. C. B., a seaman in the Royal Navy, medium height, dark, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young lady.

ROSE and LIZZIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Rose is eighteen, fair, of a loving disposition. Lizzie is seventeen, light hair, considered good-looking.

C. W. and L. L. W., two privates in the R. M. A., would like to correspond with two young women with a view to matrimony. C. W. is twenty-four, brown hair, blue eyes, good-looking. L. L. W. is twenty-one, auburn hair, hazel eyes, good-looking, of a loving disposition. Respondents must be about the same age, tall, dark, good-tempered.

ALBERT and HENRY, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies about nineteen. Albert is twenty, medium height, dark hair, hazel eyes. Henry is twenty-three, hazel eyes, medium height.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

MINNIE is responded to by—A. H., tall, dark, blue eyes.

EDWARD S. by—Ellen, twenty-six, brown hair, grey eyes, domesticated.

LIMBER UP by—S. S., twenty-one, tall, fair, good-looking.

GEORGE by—Irene.

EMILY by—Lex Studens.

C. C. by—Flora, twenty-three, and fond of home and music.

LIZZIE by—Arthur B., eighteen, medium height, good-looking.

ADA by—H. W., tall, fair, hazel eyes.

EMILY by—Walter, hazel eyes, tall, fond of home and music.

MAY by—D. S., fond of home.

EMILY by—H. J., nineteen.

MARIA by—A Constant Reader.

LYNARDY by—Little Pet, sixteen, light brown hair, fond of music.

HARRY H. by—Victoria.

FRED M. by—Harriett.

PRIMROSE by—Reginald.

WALTER by—Eliza, twenty, fair, fond of home, good-tempered.

HARRY by—Bessie, nineteen, medium height, fond of home.

ORLANDO by—Queenie C., twenty, medium height, and dark.

MARIA by—Edwin, nineteen, good-looking, and fond of home.

ALICE by—C. K., twenty-six, of a loving disposition, good-looking.

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